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Thomas Henry Briggs : philosopher and educator.

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THOMAS HENRY BRIGGS:
PHILOSOPHER AND EDUCATOR

A Dissertation Presented

By

Owen George Marley

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DEDICATION

To Thomas Henry Briggs, a man
whose personal attention to the
author sparked a new and
refreshing outlook.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

In an acknowledgment page tribute to those people who encouraged and guided you in this segment of your scholastic pursuit is usually ineffable. However, words are unsuitable to express true feelings about this project for the author's success has been achieved only through the efforts and contributions of many people.

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ABSTRACT

Thomas Henry Briggs:
Philosopher and Educator (May, 1974)
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This study has presented an exposition of the educational philosophy of Thomas Henry Briggs, and has traced the personal development and evolvement of his career from its early years to post-retirement, a span of nine decades. During the first four decades of the twentieth century Briggs was an active participant in the progressive movement at Teachers College, Columbia University, where he was a Professor of Secondary Education until his retirement in 1942. Briggs' early years and his inchoate teaching activities during his normal school period were examined. Thomas Briggs was an early devotee to the junior high school movement (1915), an educational reaction to the findings of the Committee of Ten (1893), and later the Committee on the Reorganization of Secondary Education, which produced the "Cardinal Principles" of secondary education in 1918. Briggs' involvement in the experimental Speyer Junior High School in New York City earned him the shibboleth of "father of the junior high school." Briggs' major contributions to the initiation of the junior high school were of an investigatory nature, coupled with his

five-year Directorship of the Speyer School.

During Dr. Briggs' tenure at Teachers College he developed several important, pragmatically based, philosophical principles which were significant theoretical and practical contributions to education. One such principle Briggs termed the Golden Rules of Education. Through this principle Dr. Briggs clarified one segment concerning his ideals of what education should accomplish.

Briggs' involvement in the public sector of education intensified in his advocation of the Great Investment Theory; a set of guide lines to provide a continual state of public interest in their educational destiny. By the mid-1930s Briggs ranked as one of the most significant contemporary leaders in the developing American educational scene. His constant emergence in educational currents put him in contact with such major educators as Edward Thorndike, John Dewey, George Counts, William Bagley, Dean James Russell, Harold Ruggs, David Snedden and William Kilpatrick. Briggs' influence during this critical period of American social, political and educational change marked him as an important innovator in the blend of a liberal educator. After his retirement in 1942, his prolonged interest in the school as focus of change netted him accolades for his contributions to the field of secondary education.

In reviewing Briggs' educational works, this study

has shown that Dr. Briggs was a major influence in the field of education, although his efforts were not nationally recognized for many years. His educational contributions have become a legacy applicable to societal needs of today and tomorrow. A consideration of the character and works of Thomas Briggs is paramount to understand the major influences of educational change in twentieth century America.

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C H A P T E R I

INTRODUCTION

I saw a man pursuing the
horizon,
Round and round he went.
I accosted the man,
"It is futile," I said;
"You can never..... "
"You lie," he cried,
And ran on.

Stephen Crane[1]
(1871-1900)

In a general sense, education has been a characteristic of man ever since he existed on this planet. It was not until the time of the ancient Greeks, however, that education was established on a more rational basis in formal institutions known as schools. From the archaic Homeric period to the flowering of the Classical civilization, the Greeks explicitly sought through education to train the young in skills and values necessary for participation in the society and for attainment of what they conceived to be ideal manhood. Underlying all their educational activities there was an image of the ideal man and there was an inner conviction that the welfare of the society rested on the education of its members.[2] With us,

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[1]Stephen Crane, The Black Riders, Verse XXIV, in The Poetry of Stephen Crane, ed. by Daniel Hoffman (New York: Columbia University Press, 1956), p. 200.

[2]P. Nash, A. Kazamias, H. Perkinson, The Educated Man (New York: J. Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1967), p. 59.

as with the Greeks, this conviction has invested education with a nobility and stateliness, but at the same time has given it a tragic note. ". . .for although man has constantly striven to create a better society and better human beings through education, we seem today to be confronted with the same problems and paradoxes as were the ancients - we offer different solutions, we construct different theories, but many fundamental questions are still as unanswerable as ever."[3] Perhaps there is solace in the belief that it is the pursuit of our goals - that constant quest which brings its own rewards, that is the essence of education. As Thomas H. Briggs so aptly put it: "Where there is no vision, the people perish."[4]

This study will seek to present an exposition of Thomas Briggs' philosophy of education. The research will have two main emphases: the educational philosophy of Briggs, as revealed in his speeches, writings and teachings; and the service given by Thomas Briggs through leadership and practical contributions to education in our society. In following both lines of development as effort will be made to trace the long-term influence of his work upon American education.

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[3]Ibid., p. 1.

[4]Thomas Henry Briggs, Secondary Education (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1933), p. 553.

To understand Briggs' significance, it will be necessary first to examine his theoretical posture. Briggs agreed to an extent with Benjamin Franklin, who ardently believed that there should be no separation between theory and practice in either life or education.[5] This study shall attempt to examine how Thomas H. Briggs turned his educational theories concerning curriculum, emotionalized attitudes, accountability of schools and the administrator's role in secondary education, into productive, satisfactory programs. What challenged him to acknowledge and attempt to solve fundamental problems in education?

Briggs' life spanned ninety-four years (1877-1971), from the post - Civil War Reconstruction period to the computer technology of the 1970s. Several factors greatly influenced secondary education during his lifetime. One of the most significant changes during the first decades of this century involved the tremendous increase in the proportion of adolescent youth continuing in school.

> Beginning about 1890, when secondary education was sought by a relatively small number of youth with superior academic minds and economic backgrounds, the increase has been caused chiefly by three factors: increasing popular faith or fetish in 'education,' even though the meaning of the term was not clearly defined; increasing national wealth distributed widely, even if very unequally, among the population; and the decreasing need for

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[5]Gerald Gutek, An Historical Introduction to American Education (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Co., 1970), p. 32.

youth in industry, supported by legislation derived from the democratic theory of equality of opportunity. [6]

Far reaching changes were needed in educational programs to parallel the growth of pupil enrollment. Between 1890 and 1950 the secondary school enrollment increased from approximately 200,000 to approximately 8,143,000, as follows: [7]

Year	Enrollment
1890	202,963
1900	519,251
1910	915,061
1920	2,200,389
1930	4,399,422
1940	6,601,444
1950	8,143,000

A serious consideration stemming from this rapid population growth was "shall secondary education be provided at public expense for all normal individuals, or for only a limited number?" [8]

Amid this demographic growth rose the progressive movement in education. The progressive education movement began in the 1890s as an attempt to bring the "American ideal" to the new industrial-urban communities that were

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[6] Briggs, Secondary Education, p. 131.

[7] Statistical Summary of Education, 1943-1944, Federal Security Agency, United States Office of Education, Washington, U.S. Government Printing Office, 1947, p. 18.

[8] Issues of Secondary Education, Report of the Committee on the Orientation of Secondary Education of the Dept. of Secondary School Principals of the National Education Association, by T. Briggs, Chairman (published 1936 by the Dept., Chicago, Ill., as Bulletin 59), p. 31.

emerging during the latter half of the nineteenth century.[9]

Progressive education was a multi-faceted effort to improve the social lives of individuals in a democratic state. To kindle this humanitarian effort, in the minds of the progressive educators, meant several things. First, to broaden the function and program of school to include direct concern for community life; second, it meant applying the new theoretical principles derived from psychological and sociological research into the classrooms; third, in the tradition of the common school movement that Horace Mann had ignited a generation before, i.e., education for all, it meant new methods to fit the needs of all. Finally, progressives implied that culture could be democratized without being vulgarized.[10]

Politically and socially progressivism meant more than the progressive party (Bull Moose) that supported Theodore Roosevelt for the presidency in 1912. There was broader drive after 1900 toward criticism and change stimulated by agrarian discontent and enhanced again by the growing middle class for economic and social reform. The social march of events affected the entire tone of American life. One of its themes focused on an attempt to restore a sense of economic individualism and political democracy that had existed earlier in America, but had been destroyed

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[9]Lawrence A. Cremin, The Transformation of the School (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1962), p. 21.

[10]Ibid., pp. 8-9.

by the giant corporations and corrupt political machines. It was an era of self-reformation to bring back the lost moral and civic purity - a philosophy that emphasized operation through intelligent social action.[11]

Philosophically, progressivism is essentially the application of pragmatism to education. It is customary to consider Charles S. Peirce, William James and John Dewey as the founders of pragmatism, although some trace its origin to Heraclitus, a Greek philosopher who lived before Socrates. Pragmatism, with its rejection of metaphysical absolutes, utopias, and ultimate truths, seemed to become the philosophical bridge many people saw as the transition to the new practical temper of American culture. William James introduced the term pragmatism to popular audiences at the University of California in 1898 and ascribed its authorship to Charles Sanders Peirce.[12] Peirce, James, and Dewey developed the method differently, however they converged their interpretation of pragmatism toward one goal - the need for a philosophy that combined knowing and doing in its reaction against traditional absolutes which did not stress that the individual learns best by

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[11]Richard Hofstadter, The Age of Reform (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1955), pp. 5-7.

[12]Clarence J. Karier, Man, Society, and Education (Glenview, Ill.: Scott, Foresman and Company, 1967), p. 124.

doing.[13]

The labels, pragmatism that followed Peirce, radical empiricism that followed James, and instrumentalism, i.e., reconstruction of experiences that followed Dewey, do not reflect incompatibilities, only a variance of understanding to fulfill their own individual needs. Peirce was a logician, James a psychologist and Dewey, a social philosopher.[14] To fully understand the progressive educational movement, it is necessary to understand the philosophy of pragmatism.[15] It is estimated that nine-tenths of the teachers who studied psychology between 1890 and 1910 read James. A profound impact of educational psychology on American education was promulgated by James' pupil, Edward L. Thorndike, who endeavored to link the philosophy of pragmatism with American education.[16]

In this spirit the progressive period flourished. The movement gathered political momentum in the decades before World War I. In the 1920s and 1930s it reached its greatest impact on American schools, colleges and the teaching profession. Its ultimate collapse occurred in the 1950s. To many the mood of the progressive movement lingers

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[13]Ibid., p. 125.

[14]Ibid., p. 126.

[15]Paul Nash, "The Strange Death of Progressive Education," Educational Theory, Vol. XVI, Number 2, April 1964, p. 72.

[16]Karier, Man, Society, and Education, pp. 135-137.

on awaiting a resuscitation and reformation into the mainstream of American education.[17]

Robert Hutchins, former president of the University of Chicago, remarked in the 1950s on the aim of secondary education:

> There is an underlying paradox in American education. We believe in education for all because we believe in democracy. Belief in democracy is belief in the capacity of the people. But we do not believe in the capacity of the people. We do not dare to say that we must give up education for all because we do not dare to say that we do not believe in the capacity of the people. Therefore we continue to proclaim our devotion to education for all, but surreptitiously substitute accommodation for education.[18]

A further extension of this is the question of "whether it is possible to have true education for anybody in a country that insists on something called education for everybody."[19]

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[17]Cremin, The Transformation of the School, p. 353.

Note: Presently some critics of the Progressive movement indicate that little real concern was shown the children. Political and economic themes were the main concerns and it represents a class effort for municipal reform. (Michael B. Katz, Class, Bureaucracy, and Schools (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1971), p. 113). The connections, often suggested by historians, between education and political progressivism in America during the early decades of this century did exist, but fell short of reaching the high point in attempting resolutions to social inequalities. (Colin Greer, The Great School Legend (New York: The Viking Press, 1972), p. 79).

[18]Robert M. Hutchins, Some Observations On American Education (Cambridge: University Press, 1956), pp. 98-99.

[19]Idem, Conflict in Education (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1953), p. xiii.

Many of the questions asked about the goals and practices of education show up in current debate. Shall secondary education provide a common curriculum for all, or differentiated offerings?[20] Were Thomas Briggs' answers of the 1930s and 1940s consistent with the demands of today? The questions he raised then about mass education, socialization of schools, needs of individuals, formalized curriculum, private involvement in education, remain relevant to the key issues of today. Sociologists inform us that what is happening in our cities, schools and campuses today are not strange phenomena peculiar to our times, but are evolutionary cultural events that have been previously experienced by society.[21] "The past can be easily obscured by the exaggerated glare of present day mass media and the overreaction of a jittery, insecure society."[22]

This study will attempt to identify the relevance of Briggs' theory and practice to the development of American education, primarily between the pre - World War I and post - World War II periods. In 1933, he wrote, "Our schools should be adapted to the civilization in which they exist."[23] Was that challenge met? Are school admini-

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[20] Bulletin 59, p. 157.

[21] Robert Shaffer, "Youth's Challenge to Education," Today's Education, November, 1969, p. 32.

[22] Ibid.

[23] Briggs, Secondary Education, p. vi.

strators still grappling with the problem today? In seeking to answer such questions the first and perhaps most important point to be made is a rather paradoxical one: that in one sense much of the work of the pioneer educators is not in fact part of the history of education at all. Rather it is still current in that the substantive topics which are discussed and the issues of theory and method which are raised are still live ones, and remain focal points of contemporary inquiry and debate. The educational issues of the past, in other words, often retain an immediate significance for both the educators and the schools of the present.

In attempting to make a contribution to the clarification of the fundamental principles of Thomas H. Briggs, this study will attempt to determine:

1. What was the educational philosophy of Thomas Briggs? How did his social philosophy evolve? What, or who, influenced his way of thinking?

2. What were the main concerns of Thomas H. Briggs during his career as an educator? Did Dr. Briggs make significant theoretical and practical contributions to education in our society?

3. In what way did Thomas Briggs interpret the influential, social-cultural factors within the broad educational scene? How was Briggs viewed by his peers, and what, if any professional criticism did his educational

philosophy encounter?

4. What legacy did Thomas H. Briggs leave us as stockholders in the enterprise of education? Does a new age demand a new education?

5. What visions for the future did Thomas H. Briggs have that would help to bring about the beginning of a "golden age" of education?

The research procedure utilized in this study, viewed in socio-historical terms is that of Carver V. Good whose Introduction To Research: Methodology of Design in the Behavioral and Social Sciences treats at length the application of historical research to the social and behavioral sciences. Defining history, its scope, Good explained:

> . . .viewed as research, history may be defined as an integrated narrative or description of past events or facts, written in a spirit of critical inquiry, to find the whole truth and report.... the researcher or historian determine the authenticity and meaning of sources through the process of external and internal criticism . . .External. . .concerned with genuineness. . .internal with the means and trustworthiness of statements within the documents.[24]

To reveal what we should learn from history it is necessary to research the past, for the past is a bridge to the present. Substantive topics that are discussed and the issues of theory and method that are raised remain points of current inquiry and debate. Much is to be gained

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[24]Carver V. Good, Introduction To Research: Methodology of Design in the Behavioral and Social Sciences (New York: Appleton-Century, 1963), pp. 190-192.

by tracing the origin, development, and fate of ideas in relationship to existing conditions and to other ideas.

The history of Thomas Briggs' ideas is an integral part of the story of his life, and his ideas at any period of his life can be adequately appreciated only in the light of his whole personality. These and other considerations will result in the adoption of a research method combining the topical (current) with the biographical (past).

This study, being a historical research, will draw on primary source material including Briggs' unpublished manuscripts. Articles found in professional educational journals and non-professional essays authored by Dr. Briggs will be consulted. Interviews, granted for the National Education Association and the National Association of Secondary School Principals, predominantly about Briggs' views as an educator, have proved to be a valuable research source.

The author's interviews with Dr. Briggs took place on two occasions; once in his New York City home, and at a later date in Meredith, New Hampshire. Personal letters were exchanged, the contents of which provided fascinating material germane to the dissertation.

Secondary source materials available for a study of Thomas Briggs are plentiful. For the purposes of this investigation letters, addresses, articles by his friends and colleagues have been studied, as have relevant books

that touch upon, in a scholarly manner, those principles in education about which Thomas Henry Briggs was most concerned.

This study will be limited to an investigation of the philosophy and educational contributions of one man, Thomas Henry Briggs. The investigation will concern itself only with those forces that affected education as he perceived it.

Identified for special consideration and examination will be the long-term influence that his work in the field of secondary education had upon American education.

It would seem impossible for a research-historian to make a study of a great educator's ideas without being influenced by his own philosophy. This is especially true of a study that is interpretive rather than being merely descriptive in character. In spite of its limitations, this study, it is hoped, presents a reasonably accurate analysis of the educational philosophy and place in history of an outstanding American educator.

The literature related to the problems proposed in this study is profuse. The growing number of descriptive and informative publications dealing with various facets of education is indicative of continuous interest. Numerous semi-scientific studies describing the philosophies of educational leaders can be found. To these only passing reference will be made. Studies and reports that are rele-

vant to the philosophy and educational beliefs of Thomas Briggs, i.e., readings concerned with curriculum, attitudes and mores, functions and issues in secondary education, will be analyzed.

Relevant works of educational movements in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century will be considered, as will reports of educational committees, such as the Committee of Ten. This Committee was chaired by Charles W. Eliot, President of Harvard, and was composed of a group of distinguished educators who, beginning in 1893, took under advisement the problem of a uniform high school curriculum, attempting to establish programs of study for the secondary schools. The Committee reported to the nation on the responsibility of secondary schools for preparing students for college.[25] The 1894 report issued by the Committee encountered critics; among them Briggs who, in 1931, found the Committee, during its working years, hampered by doctrines of formal discipline.[26]

The main report of the Commission of the Reorganization of Secondary Education was published under the title of Cardinal Principles of Secondary Education in 1918. The

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[25]Karier, Man, Society, and Education, p. 72.

[26]Thomas Henry Briggs, "The Committee of Ten," Junior-Senior High School Clearing House, November 1931, pp. 134-135.

report encompassed the idea that education for democratic citizenship could no longer be handled by the elementary school alone, therefore, the secondary school was committed to both individual and social aims. Thomas H. Briggs and William Heard Kilpatrick, who was one of the important interpreters of John Dewey, were the only ones selected from Columbia's Teachers College to serve on the reviewing committee.[27]

A great source of information has been found in two issues of the National Association of Secondary School Principals Bulletin that were published in the mid-thirties. As Chairman of the Committee on the Orientation of Secondary Education, Dr. Briggs gave expression to his concerns and purposes. In two complete issues he spelled out the fundamental "Issues of Secondary Education," (January, 1936), and "Functions of Secondary Education," (January, 1937). In the words of Dr. Fred T. Wilhelms, long-time colleague, "The world of secondary education would be different today if schoolmen had recognized the bedrock quality of those issues and functions and gone ahead to act on them. They remain, today, a great legacy from a great educator, ready to be used once more when we achieve the good sense to use them."[28]

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[27]Edward A. Krug, The Shaping of the American High School (New York: Harper and Row, 1964), p. 378.

[28]Pamphlet, The Briggs Club, 1968, p. 11.

Writings of educational critics, such as George S. Counts, Richard Hofstadter and Michael B. Katz, will be consulted for their views. The influence of critics is two-fold: on the one hand pernicious and destructive, and on the other healing and creative. Their criticism has helped bring about many improvements in education; however, in some cases it has caused education to regress to former, inferior patterns and standards.

No basic disagreement was found between the critics and Briggs on the theory that education should be concerned with the whole of life, though this is and has been often opposed by tradition. "Any proposal for radical reform meets the hostility of the great majority of those who are vaguely satisfied with the status quo."[29] Much of tradition is worth preserving, but at the same time it must be realized that much of it is no longer pertinent to the changes in our civilization.[30] One must keep in mind the warning John Dewey delivered, "The real danger is in perpetuating the past under forms that claim to be new, but are only disguises of the old."[31]

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[29]Briggs, Secondary Education, p. 555.

[30]Idem, "Self-Rating Scale for High School Principals," Bulletin - National Association of Secondary School Principals, Vol. 29, December 1942, p. 80.

[31] E. R. Clapp, The Use of Resources in Education (New York: Harper and Row, 1952), Introduction.

In this light the writings of Benjamin Franklin, an eighteenth century intellectual and man of ideas who translated his thoughts into practice,[32] must be considered. In 1749, Franklin wrote his Proposals Relating to the Education of Youth in Pennsylvania, followed in 1751 by the Idea of the English School, Sketch'd Out for the Consideration of the Trustees of the Philadelphia Academy. He proposed that an academy for the education of youth be chartered in Philadelphia, suggesting that it would be well to teach the young ". . .everyThing that is useful. . ."[33] Franklin felt that the Latin grammar school was not providing the practical secondary education needed by colonial youth.

In an attempt to arrive at a better understanding of those forces that influenced Thomas Briggs' educational philosophy, several works of John Dewey have been examined. Dewey's philosophy of "progressive education," which humanized education as never before, had some influence on both curriculum and methods of teaching. Based in the fundamental relation between theory and practice, Dewey sums up his view on the matter in his famous statement from Democracy and Education: "If we are willing to conceive of education as the process of forming fundamental dispositions, intel-

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[32]Lawrence A. Cremin, Preface to Harvard Educational Review, Volume 36, Number 4, 1966, p. 392.

[33]David B. Tyack, Turning Points in American Educational History (Waltham, Mass.: Blaisdell, 1967), p.74.

lectual and emotional, toward nature and fellow men, philosophy may even be defined as the general theory of education.[34]

The Dewey philosophy contained much which, if understood and sensibly applied, would lead to a new concept that education should be concerned with the development of the whole individual and his social as well as his personal needs instead of merely with subject matter, whether or not it promised to contribute to usefulness of any kind. The Dewey view of "growth leading to more growth" and his definition of education as a "process of continuous reconstruction of experience" emphasize two very important points - education is not a thing, but a process, and it never finishes.[35] The process goes on partly in school, and partly in all informed social intercourse throughout a lifetime.[36] In the development of any viable, contemporary educational system man must be educated for his type of society. John Dewey's society in the twentieth century was different from that of the rugged pioneer environment of early America. The inchoate pragmatists were products of the transitional period between the adjustment from the agrarian life style to life in urban centers restless with industrial growth. Just as

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[34]John Dewey, Democracy and Education (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1916), p. 328.

[35]Idem, The Philosophy of Education (Ames, Iowa: Littlefield and Adams, 1938), p. 90.

[36]Ibid.

Dewey implied that William James "gave intellectual expression to the life of the pioneer who made the country," so Dewey himself has been considered the defender of American commercialism and materialism.[37]

It was William James' psychology however, that, extended by Dewey and others, influenced the great majority of American educators to adopt theoretically the ideal of education as training for adjustment to life. Education became psychologically based and the school became child-centered. Individualism was re-enforced, but individualism in terms of adjustment to environment. Most importantly, James' psychology provided an impetus against the lock step in the classroom.[38]

The book Pragmatism and other writings of William James had great impact on Briggs, who adopted the experimental version of the philosophy. This version deals with practical consequences of actions or beliefs and served as a framework in the formulation of Briggs' own philosophy. More than any single group of philosophers and/or psychologists, the experimentalists succeeded in breaking the shackles of centuries of inflexible tradition.[39]

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[37]Nash, Kazamias, Perkinson, The Educated Man, p. 311.

[38]Karier, Man, Society, and Education, p. 126.

[39]P. F. Olivia, ed., The Secondary School Today (New York: The World Publishing Co., 1968), p. 255.

The curriculum is today a crucial challenge for all educators. Involving everything of importance, one's philosophy as well as all facts, the problem of what to teach is extremely complex. An examination of school textbooks, or an observation of normal classes will reveal that tradition is stronger than invention. In one of his delightful books, the French entomologist, Henri Fabre, tells of processionary caterpillars: "Once, finding a string of them in his garden, he guided the front end until it was in contact with the last straggler. What did the leader do? He followed a new leader, which had previously been at the tail end. Around and around went the procession, each caterpillar loyal, industrious, and persistent, until it was broken by some who starved to death and fell out of line."[40]

Was Fabre writing only about caterpillars? It may require a catastrophe to break our procession in the curriculum tradition - and perhaps such a catastrophe would be beneficial in the long run. Dr. Briggs felt, "It might result in a new race of educators who, already loyal and industrious, are able and eager to think for themselves and courageous to persist pragmatically in their attempts to put into practical effect a program suited to the needs of

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[40]Thomas H. Briggs, "Monosyllables," The Educational Forum, Vol. XII, No. 1, November 1947, p. 9.

youth of our day and thus contributory to the general social welfare."[41]

The institution of the secondary school is one of complexity for it has the dual task of being a terminal school for some and a preparatory school for others. Many of the books that are written on the subject are factual in nature, few attempting to clarify the special functions of secondary schools or to discuss the more fundamental principles on which it is built. Most of the books written by Dr. Briggs on the subject of education have proved relevant to this study. Close attention was given to Secondary Education, his classic book. In this volume, he ventures to present and open for further discussion some of the basic problems that must be solved before secondary schools can find themselves and move forward. It offered not so much a picture of what is, as a vision of what may be.

Thomas H. Briggs lectured in virtually every state, (forty-eight), and gave a number of well known, endowed lectures, including the Inglis lecture at Harvard University, the Sir John Adams lecture at the University of California, Los Angeles, the Julius and Rosa Sachs lectures at Columbia University, and the Laureate lecture of Kappa Delta Pi. The Great Investment, title of the Inglis lecture, has proved very helpful in attempting to answer the problems posed in

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[41] Ibid.

this study.

Several hundred magazine articles, not all professional, ranging from satires published in School and Society (under the pseudonym of Quintus Flaccus II), to war essays, to discussions of poetry were authored by Dr. Briggs. No attempt was made to read all of the literature that Briggs produced, however, those sources containing information pertinent to this study were consulted.

Chapter II will provide a synopsis of Briggs the man; Briggs the educator. The profile will form into four parts: the first will deal with Thomas Briggs' early history and influences, his formal education and resultant teaching experiences; the second part will explore the formation and workings of the Briggs Club; the third section will trace Briggs' interest in composition and the English language, and the long-term influence of his writings on American education; the fourth will briefly view Briggs' diverse range of interests and accomplishments.

CHAPTER II

EARLY YEARS

Early years. On January 24, 1877, Thomas Briggs was born. His adult life spanned the New Deal of President Teddy Roosevelt, the Suffragette Movement, Prohibition, the Great Depression, the New Deal of President Franklin D. Roosevelt, the McCarthyism of the 1950s and the New Frontier of Presidents Kennedy and Johnson. To understand Thomas Briggs' early development the spirit of the decades from 1877 to 1900 will be considered. Social change during the latter third of the nineteenth century was swift and confused. It was an age of transition.

By the 1880s America had entered a tumultuous and vastly fruitful period of development in industry, commerce, transportation, communication and education. Before this turmoil the homogeneity of the life in the pioneering and agrarian society in which many communities were geographically and culturally isolated from one another had created a general condition of economic equality and security. Now there was rapid change when this static life style was interrupted by a highly industrial, materialistic civilization that increased human tensions and needs and required heterogeneous social stratification.[1]

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[1]George S. Counts, The American Road to Culture (New York: The John Day Company, 1930), p. 1.

The same year Briggs was born Rutherford B. Hayes was inaugurated as President of the United States that symbolized the end of post - Civil War Reconstruction in the South. With the removal of the Federal troops from the South (1877), the period of the Carpetbaggers was over and the South emerged in the 1880s and 1890s from an agrarian plantation economy to a land of opportunity for industrial and financial growth.[2] Although the defeat of the Confederacy preserved the Union, it transformed America into a national state controlled by the industrial and financial powers from Boston-New York to Chicago. Coincidentally, the management principles used to maintain the efficiency of the Union armies were applied to the operation of the mushrooming, private, industrial monopolistic corporations. A new mood of resentment toward railroad leaders and money lenders developed in Western farmers who saw these empire builders responsible for the growing poverty and suffering in the Northern cities.[3] This prevailing attitude in late nineteenth century America in the West failed to nourish the cooperation between the farmers and the urban laborers necessary to bring about the practical consequences of the

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[2]Ellis Paxson Oberholtzer, A History of the United States Since the Civil War (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1926), Chap. I, pp. 56-58.

[3]Hofstadter, The Age of Reform, pp. 54-58.

social-economic revolution.

In this social upheaval a strong sentiment began to develop for increased sensitivity to the needs of children and youth. A new sense of social responsibility favored excluding children from the pains of industrial growth and providing for them expanded educational opportunities.[4] However it was not until the enactment of the Child Labor Law in 1916 and its handmaidens the compulsory attendance laws that this general feeling in the 1890s was finally supported.[5]

The United States and Europe were linked with a submarine cable in 1866; in 1869 the Suez Canal was opened. Industrial improvement, such as the Bessemer process for making steel and the use of refrigerators in the meat packing industry, drastically changed former methods of manufacturing. The conversion of petroleum and the use of electricity in the manufacturing process eliminated old industries and developed new ones.[6] This type of industrial expansion created modern American cities. By the 1890s, New York, Philadelphia and Chicago had grown beyond a million inhabitants. The 1895 population of New York City

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[4]Krug, The Shaping of the American High School, p. 260.

[5]Robert E. Potter, The Stream of American Education (New York: The American Book Company, 1967), p. 388.

Note: Mississippi in 1918 was the last state to vote a compulsory attendance law for the people.

[6]Hofstadter, The Age of Reform, pp. 50-51.

had surpassed Paris and Berlin and concomitantly equalled one-half the size of London.[7]

Henry Steele Commager, historian, compared the 1890s to a great watershed in American history, a decade in which "the new America came in as on flood tide."[8] For the great mass of Americans the printed word was the main instrument of cultural exchange. In the mass production of the written word, no other achievement in modern times surpasses Ottmar Mengenthall's 1885 invention of the linotype. In 1896 Alexander Graham Bell invented the telephone - a boon to the West and South for it tended to break down their rural isolation.[9]

In general, the phenomenal growth of cities from the 1870s to the 1890s meant a greater demand for amusements, bigger and better newspapers, magazines, books, and culture. The people began to center their interest on art galleries, museums, concert halls, public libraries and schools. This social interaction sharpened the educative and creative spirit within the American cities. Illiteracy, for example, declined from seventeen percent in 1880, to thirteen percent

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[7]Theodore R. Sizer, Secondary Schools at the Turn of the Century (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1964), pp. 4-7.

[8]Henry Steele Commager, The American Mind (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1950), p. ii.

[9]Potter, The Stream of American Education, p. 369.

in 1890 (the foreign immigration influx notwithstanding).[10] Compulsory school laws were enacted in nineteen states by the 1880s. Free textbooks in New York City in the 1880s quickly spread to other metropolises. Farm belt groups, such as Farmers' Alliance and Grange, agitated for better schools during this decade.[11] A civic intelligence was molding among the masses. In 1878 high schools numbered less than 800; by 1898 the figure had increased to 5,500.[12] In turn, this institutionalized growth put pressure on the colleges to make higher education available to all Americans with ambition and ability.

The new material plane of industrialism in the 1870s tended to make Americans lay stress upon their manufacturers, their technology and their quantitative output. The American economy was moving from a corn and cotton base to one of coal and iron, with the steamship replacing the clipper ship. In the social change within the sphere of man's culture, a more literate citizenship was trying to fuse the new feeling of inspiration with the utilitarian awareness that education and books were the means to the end in the search for worldly success. By 1900 in the United States

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[10]Krug, The Shaping of the American High School, pp. 209-211.

[11]Hofstadter, The Age of Reform, pp. 43-46.

[12]Burton W. Gorman, Secondary Education (New York: Random House, 1971), pp. 10-13.

there was a sense of security in the new materialistic program, but it also created conflict with the impact of scientific naturalism on the traditional values.[13]

Dr. Thomas Briggs, born one year after the death of General George Armstrong Custer in the Battle of Little Big Horn (1876), bridged the years from the Wright brothers first plane flight in Kitty Hawk, North Carolina, to Neil Armstrong's walk on the moon. Raleigh, North Carolina, capitol of one of the original thirteen states, was the birthplace in which Thomas Henry Briggs was raised. The tone of the community was most conservative; there was no library except those run by the Sunday schools. A large percentage of Thomas Briggs' education came from reading and early in his life he became familar with, among other things, Audubon's The Birds of America and Hogarth's The Prince.[14]

Briggs, who died in 1971, was an alumnus of the Dame School that flourished in the nineteenth century all over the country. This type of school followed the pattern of private educational institutions first taught by housewives in their own homes in exchange for payment by their students'

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[13]Hofstadter, The Age of Reform, pp. 64-65.

[14]Who's Who in America, 1950-1951 edition, Vol. 26, p. 320.

families.[15] Later American schoolmasters conducted private schools in conventional school buildings. In Raleigh, North Carolina, the Dame School attended by Thomas Briggs was run by a widow, Mrs. Justice, who had to piece out her small income by teaching children and by renting out rooms. The schoolroom itself was simply a bedroom with the bed taken out. The pupils sat on long, straight benches without backs where they studied the two principal subjects, elementary arithmetic and reading.[16]

Briggs' interest in etymology can be traced back to the opening of the Centennial Graded School located at the foot of Favial Street when young Briggs was enrolled in the fourth grade.[17] One day on the playground a tenant of Mrs. Justice's came by and playfully took the ball with which Thomas Briggs and his friends were playing and threw it up into the air. At the time it seemed to nine-year-old Briggs that the ball went almost to the clouds, but, more realistically, it probably was not more than thirty or forty feet. It struck Briggs as very amusing that a man named "Thrower" should be throwing a ball[18], and that incident was the beginning evidence of Briggs' interest in words,

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[15]Walter H. Small, Early New England Schools (Boston: Ginn and Company, 1944), p. 328.

[16]Taped interview with Dr. Warren C. Seyfert, Washington, D.C., August, 1964.

[17]Ibid.

[18]Ibid.

which lasted through the years and caused him to wear out dictionaries and to write numerous essays on the subject.

As there was not a single public high school in North Carolina until 1906[19], Briggs prepared for college in private schools, studying Latin and Greek, English and mathematics. In 1893 he entered Wake Forest College located in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. At that time the school had been in operation for fifty-nine years, and was a private institution for males only (it has since become co-educational in 1942).[20] He earned his Bachelor of Arts degree in three years, graduating in 1896.[21] During a personal interview with Dr. Briggs, he recalled the great disappointment he felt when he walked down the platform at commencement time, diploma in hand, because no miracle had happened. He was just the same person that had ventured up to the platform in the first place.[22]

After graduation, Briggs taught English, Latin and Greek at the Atlantic Collegiate Institution, a private high school in Elizabeth City, North Carolina. During those initial years of teaching (1896-1898) Briggs felt that

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[19]Thomas Henry Briggs, "Reading: What Is It?," Educational Forum, May 1966, p. 465.

[20]The College Blue Book, 1972 edition, Vol. 21, p. 532.

[21]Who's Who in America, p. 320.

[22]Author's personal interview with Dr. Briggs, New York, New York, May 1970.

he learned more than he had learned in college through courses.[23]

After two years in Elizabeth City, North Carolina, Briggs went West. He enrolled in the University of Chicago, majoring in English and sociology, and taught, simultaneously, at the Princeton-Yale Academy in Chicago.[24] At the end of the first year he was given the position of Professor of English at Stetson University, a school affilated with the University of Chicago, located in DeLand, Florida. The Stetson University experience proved to be an unhappy one: ". . .the President there being everything a President should not be, personally and professionally."[25]

During a conference with Professor Reynolds, to whom Briggs had been an assistant in English at the University of Chicago, Thomas Briggs was asked if he would be interested in teaching in a normal school. To this point in his twenty-two years, Briggs had never been in a normal school, and the reputation of such institutions was very low in his mind; however, he met the President of the proposed institution, Livingston C. Lord, and was so impressed by the man that he accepted the assignment. Briggs remained at the Eastern Illinois State Normal School, Charlestown,

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[23] Who's Who in New York, edition 12, 1952, p. 13.

[24] Who's Who in America, p. 320.

[25] Briggs, New York tape.

Illinois, for ten years (1901-1911).[26]

President L. C. Lord, of the Eastern Illinois State Normal School, was an early, positive influence on Briggs. Lord was "a most remarkable man."[27] Although his education had been in normal schools in Connecticut, he had continued his education until he was one of the most erudite and liberally educated men that Briggs felt he had ever known.[28] During Briggs' teaching at Charlestown, Illinois, he was primarily interested only in becoming technically proficient in teaching English. Two things changed this goal. Through the teachings of President Lord, Briggs learned to teach himself and came to believe "that a major purpose of education is to arouse interests that will keep expanding; growing."[29] Approximately in the middle of his term at Eastern Illinois State Normal School, Briggs read a copy of a book on civics, one of the earliest published in that field. Briggs later recalled, "For the first time, I had a light that education was something more than the formal subjects that all the schools taught."[30]

It was while teaching at Charlestown (Illinois), that Thomas Briggs reached a milestone in his career;

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[26]Ibid. [27]Ibid.

[28]Briggs, New York tape.

[29]Fred T. Wilhelms, Briggs Club, January 15, 1968, p. 9.

[30]Briggs, New York tape.

he later referred to this turning point as his "declaration of independence."[31] He had developed the ambition of joining professional societies and subscribing to professional literature, much of which he could not understand: ". . .the abstruse ideas couched in pendecasyllables were baffling."[32] One day he remarked to a colleague that he had read the yearbook of The National Society for the Study of Education, but could make no sense of it. His colleague replied, patronizingly, "Well, be patient young man, one day you will grow up and be able to understand those things."[33]

Humble in spirit and eager to learn, Briggs attended the meeting of the national society in Indianapolis, Indiana, and listened attentively to the discussion of the monograph. He could understand everything they said, but he noted that their remarks did not center on any one theme. A great light dawned for Briggs: they themselves did not understand what the author had written. . ."but having been initiated into the mystic fraternity of sophists, they were loyal to the tradition and kept the shameful secret. Pedaguese, as the language of the society

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[31]Author's interview with Briggs.

[32]Briggs, "Monosyllables," p. 5.

[33]Author's interview with Briggs.

was afterward called, was invented to conceal the lack of clear thinking and of expression designed to affect practice."[34] Thus, the discussion ended, there were mutual congratulations by the participants, the society adjourned, the old world moved calmly along on its orbit as before, and nothing was ever heard again of the yearbook.

It was then and there that Briggs signed his personal declaration of independence, which contained two articles: first, that inasmuch as an author was writing for him, and for others like him, he (Briggs) had an inalienable right of the author to demand clarity - or to ignore his work; and, second, that never again should he (Briggs) be so awed by what was impossible to understand after earnest effort, that he would not challenge the author to restate his ideas in simple language. In short, if one who desires to influence others does not make his ideas clear, he fails, not they.[35]

Furthermore, after long experience, Thomas Briggs came to the conclusion that anything of importance can be expressed in simple language. In 1968, Dr. Fred Wilhelms, Associate Secretary of the National Association of Secondary School Principals (retired), and colleague, reflecting

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[34] Briggs, "Monosyllalbes," p. 5.

[35] Ibid.

on Briggs' remarkable career in the field of education stated: ". . .but they (the students) always came around finally to the sheer power of his mind, and the way he taught them to turn complicated ideas into simple, direct statements they could act on. . .as a teacher, he simply had no patience with woolly abstractions."[36]

After his Illinois teaching experience, Briggs, in 1911, joined the faculty of Teachers College, Columbia University, New York City, and remained there until retirement in 1942. Teachers College at this time was under the leadership of Dean James Earl Russell, a man who believed that democracy demanded an education linked closely with the common life of the people.[37] The college rose to pre-eminence during the years of Russell's administration and became the most important intellectual center in the country trumpeting the cause of progressivism in education.[38] In 1914, Briggs received his Doctor of Philosophy degree from Columbia under E. L. Thorndike (educator who gave great impetus to the development of statistical methods in the area of education; 1874-1949); the title of Briggs dissertation was Formal English Grammar As A Discipline.[39]

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[36]Wilhelms, Briggs Club, p. 9.

[37]Cremin, The Transformation of the School, p. 173.

[38]Ibid., p. 174.

[39]Who's Who in America, p. 320.

It was at Teachers College, as a pioneer in the field of secondary education, that Briggs made his great name, with classes that constantly ran into the hundreds.[40]

The manner in which Dr. Briggs entered the field of secondary education gives a clue to the character of this man. After taking his degree at Teachers College, Columbia, Briggs was designated Chairman of the English Department of a newly established School of Practical Arts, where he taught for several years. Dean J.E. Russell, of Teachers College, one day called Briggs to his office and offered him the opportunity of becoming a Professor of Secondary Education. Briggs tried to explain that the field was completely foreign to him, and that, as a matter of fact, he had never even set foot in a public high school. Dean Russell replied, ". . .that is the very reason I have selected you for the position - I want somebody to start from scratch."[41]

Seeking to resolve the problem of whether to accept the position or not, Dr. Briggs returned to the office he occupied as Chairman of the English Department of the College of Practical Arts and for three hours sat wondering what decision to make and how to begin. For the first time in his life he was forced to face the question of what is the meaning of education. He sought the answer

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[40]Wilhelms, Briggs Club, p. 9.

[41]Briggs, New York tape.

in the library looking for a viable definition of the word. Some definitions had no meaning whatever; some were so elaborate that they were impressive without being important; some were so outlandish that they had to be discarded. The most awesome of these definitions, the one most quoted by the "educated" elite, was that by John Milton: "I call a complete and generous education that which fits a man to perform justly, skillfully, and magnanimously all the offices both public and private of peace and war."[42]

Dr. Briggs recalled that later Sir Michael Sadlier, a professor at Oxford University, England, came to Columbia to deliver a series of lectures and when he quoted this definition by Milton the entire audience crossed themselves and began to write it down. Briggs, seated in the audience, looked around to see if anybody was laughing, but every face was solemn. The absurdity of the definition, Briggs felt, becomes apparent when one attempts to apply it to life - civic life - to say nothing of war. The example Dr. Briggs imagined was of a sergeant teaching bayonet drill saying to the inductees: "...now you must bayonet the enemy magnanimously, justly..."[43]

Not finding a definition to give him guidance as to the procedure in formulating a course of study in secondary education, Briggs was forced to his own devices.

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[42]John Milton, Areopagitica (New York: E.P. Dutton and Company, Inc., 1927), p. 49.

[43]Briggs, New York tape.

In the course of time he formulated what came to be known as the "golden rules of education." This theory, examined in Chapter III, transformed into practice, eventually helped Dr. Briggs develop courses in secondary education, and he felt that it would help anyone who tried to think independently and creatively about what education should do. Thus, Thomas Briggs was launched into the sea of secondary education.

In the beginning, Dr. Briggs was the only teacher of secondary education at Teachers College, succeeding Dr. Julius Sachs who "opened up the field of secondary education."[44] Sachs had been the owner and director of two prominent, private, preparatory schools in New York City (one for boys - the other for girls).[45] Dr. Sachs "was a cultural gentleman, widely educated in the tradition of the German schools."[46]

To increase the staff, Briggs added a Professor of Administration of Secondary Schools, Professor Franklin W. Johnson, of the University of Chicago High School, and, later, President of Colby University. He was succeeded by Grayson Kefauver, who later became Dean of Education at

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[44]Cremin, The Transformation of the School, p. 173.

[45]Krug, The Shaping of the American High School, p. 118.

[46]Briggs, New York tape.

Stanford University, and Will French who continued in the position as long as Briggs was in the department.

Dr. Briggs also had Professor E. K. Fretwell, who taught extra-curricular activities, and from Hawaii he recruited Dr. Percival M. Symonds who was in charge of research in secondary education problems. Symonds had only one course to teach and freedom to do any research that he thought desirable; however, after a year or two on this assignment, he changed his interests to personnel work and was not replaced in the department. For classroom procedures, Professor Maxie N. Woodring was added to the staff. He continued in that position as long as Briggs taught at Teachers College.[47]

In addition to the regular staff, Briggs brought in for a special course the professors of the various subjects (for example - English, fine arts, mathematics). Each one spent two weeks in giving prospective high school principals a knowledge of the latest developments in the teaching of the subjects that they represented.[48]

The Briggs Club. In 1917-1918, Dr. Briggs, an imaginative educator and leader, formed a unique group that came to be known as the "Briggs Club." The membership

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[47]Briggs, New York tape.

[48]Ibid.

consisted of a group of hand-picked high school principals who, though principals, were still students of secondary education and could therefore profit from membership in the Club. Dr. Will French observed, "Those who were thus selected thought Dr. Briggs was very discriminating. Those whom he did not select probably thought so too. But in those days discrimination was not thought to be intrinsically evil and undemocratic."[49] At any rate, the Club was formed with Dr. Briggs as chariman (Factotum), secretary, treasurer and the sole member of the membership and program committees. It was the Briggs Club.

The membership came from three areas: New York City, northern New Jersey, and from the northern suburbs of the city.[50] Dr. French, an initial member of the Club, felt it was a good thing to draw members from these areas...."the tendency has been for groups to allow themselves to be divided by the existing geographical and political boundaries which have nothing to do with education."[51] Dr. French commented further, ". . .as far as I know the Briggs Club was the first means for uniting them (the three groups) for the study and discussion of their common educational problems. . .it thus anticipated the present trend toward 'regionalism' by about fifty years. . .the Club may not have eliminated all the rivalries among the three groups, but it

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[49]Will French, Briggs Club, January 15, 1968, p. 4.

[50]Briggs, New York tape. [51]French, Briggs Club, p.4.

helped."[52]

When it came to program planning, Dr. Briggs, from the onset, organized programs that dealt with matters of basic concern in secondary education. Briggs made the Club's programs deal with strategy, not tactics. The programs therefore dealt with principles, with social and educational philosophies, with issues and functions, with youth interests and needs, with teaching and learning and with the responsibility of the principal for the improvement of instruction and curriculum development.[53]

It was in this way that the Club had a chance to know of the "Cardinal Principles of Secondary Education" long before the publication appeared in print for general circulation to the profession as a whole. The work of the Committee on the Reorganization of Secondary Education was presented and discussed by members of the Club while it was in progress. Additionally, the work of various committees and Commissions of the National Association of Secondary School Principals and the American Association of (Secondary) School Administrators were presented to the Club members for study.[54]

In general, programs for the Club were planned with the idea that they would pick up ideas, proposals, criticisms, unusual practices and projects as they became significant

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[52]Ibid. [53]Ibid. [54]Ibid.

in the field of secondary education; thereby, giving the Club membership a longer time to study the implications for their own schools than otherwise would be the case.

In later years Dr. Briggs remarked that the group comprising the Briggs Club had proved to be of invaluable service to him - not only in teaching him what secondary education was in the New York City area, but also in furnishing an opportunity for experimental work in their schools.[55] After Briggs' retirement in 1942, the Club (Factotum) was led in turn by Dr. Will French and Professor David Austin. The Club continued until it celebrated its fiftieth anniversary in 1968.[56]

Development as a writer. Writing, another dimension of Thomas Briggs, consumed a major portion of his life. He had an early ambition to write and to write well. This ambition began as a boy in Raleigh. He had an afterschool job passing out the local paper. On his route he picked up news items that he passed on to the reporters, and was greatly flattered when these items appeared in print.[57]

In college (Wake Forest), Briggs was the correspondent of the leading state (North Carolina) newspaper,

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[55]Briggs, New York tape.

[56]See letters of Austin and Foose in appendix.

[57]Briggs, New York tape; author's New York interview.

and he wrote articles for the college magazine of which he later became editor. Briggs recalled the experience: ". . .it proved to me that I had little talent for writing fiction or poetry, but it did give me some self-taught ability to express myself simply and clearly."[58] While teaching at the Atlantic Collegiate Institution in Elizabeth City, North Carolina, Briggs wrote editorials for the local weekly newspaper - the editor welcoming his contributions as easy space fillers. Later, when teaching in a normal school (Charlestown, Illinois), form 1901 to 1911, Briggs continued to write editorials for the local paper, and was paid with railroad passes which, at that time, were often given to newspapers in return for certain favors. Briggs also, for several years, wrote book reviews for the Baltimore Sun.[59]

The principal lesson learned by Briggs from his writing experience was that clarity is the primary characteristic of communicative writing. He wrote, "Clarity in writing is not possible without clarity of thinking,"[60] therefore, for Briggs, attempting to improve his writing did much to teach him to think clearly.

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[58]Briggs, New York tape.

[59]Ibid.

[60]Thomas Briggs, "Research in Secondary Education," Junior-Senior High School Clearing House, Vol. 9, December 1934, p. 201.

Briggs aimed for simple, direct statements in his writing. He once said, "I hope that every sentence and every paragraph that I ever publish carries, at first reading, the meaning that I intended."[61] He learned early in his professional life that the use of pedaguese (or, as Briggs put it, high-flown language)[62] is confusing and is often ineffective in relaying the meaning necessary for comprehension or for changing attitudes or actions. This led to his declaration of independence; if what Briggs was trying to read was unduly difficult to understand, it was not worth the time necessary to puzzle out the meaning, and that the author, in such a case, had failed - not the reader.[63]

To illustrate this point, there are books by John Dewey that Briggs failed to read through - not for lack of interest, but because of the style in which they are written. Dewey's ideas were brilliant, unique, and of great consequence, but the language in which they are written is not easy to follow. Not that the words are difficult, but the sentence phrasing is abstract and disconnected.[64] There are other books by Dewey that Thomas Briggs read with the

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[61]Briggs, "Monosyllables," p. 5.

[62]Briggs, New York tape.

[63]Ibid.

[64]S. N. Worton, The Writings of John Dewey (New York: Monarch Press, 1964), p. 8.

greatest of profit. Briggs felt that there were too many good books, lucidly written, for him to waste his time on those that the author has been too lazy or unable to write in easily comprehensible language.[65]

Briggs, without intention, developed two rather different styles of writing. Both are clear. One is so easy to read that Briggs felt perhaps it failed in some cases to make the necessary impression that leads to reflection and change of attitude.[66] He was tempted to occasionally introduce here and there a few prolixities to give respect to what he was trying to say.[67]

The other writing style is more compact with words and structure so carefully chosen and used that little change can be made without causing a loss.[68] An excellent example of this style of writing can be found in the two issues of The Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary School Principals, "Issues of Secondary Education," (January, 1936),[69] and "Functions of Secondary Education," (January, 1937).[70] These statements of issues and functions are so tightly written that it is doubtful that the position

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[65]Briggs, New York tape.

[66]Ibid. [67]Ibid. [68]Ibid.

[69]Thomas Briggs, (Chm.), "Issues of Secondary Education," Bulletin 59 (Chicago: Dept. N.A.S.S.P., 1936).

[70]Idem, (Chm.). "Functions of Secondary Education," Bulletin 64 (Chicago: Dept. N.A.S.S.P., 1937).

of an adjective could be changed without interfering with the meaning. The result is that only readers who are willing to reflect on what is stated clearly will so supplement the meaning as to appreciate its full importance. Briggs also learned that it increased the effectiveness of both writing and speaking to give a large number of illustrations, and he made a rule never to give a negative illustration without immediately following it with a positive one.[71]

The first book that bore Briggs' name (as a joint authorship with L. D. Coffman, later the President of the University of Minnesota) was the earliest attempt to popularize the importance of silent reading and to give suggestions as to how it should be taught. Published in 1908, the same year that Henry Ford introduced the Model T Ford[72], Reading in Public Schools[73] was widely used by teachers' reading circles, which were popular at that time.[74] "Reading" was followed by other and better books that materially changed the emphasis on the teaching of reading.

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[71]Taped interview with Dr. Seyfert.

[72]President Lyndon B. Johnson born on this date in Stonewall, Texas.

[73]T. Briggs and L. Coffman, Reading in Public Schools (Chicago: Row, Peterson and Company, 1908).

[74]Thomas H. Briggs, "Reading: What Is It?," Educational Forum, Vol. 30, May 1966, p. 466.

In addition to being the author of numerous books while at Teachers College (1911-1942), Briggs edited Science for Everyday Life, Classroom Teacher, all the volumes issued by the Consumer Education, all the volumes issued by the Study of Economics, and several anthologies of literature for junior and senior high schools - among others.

Dr. Briggs' flowing pen also issued a great many articles for pedagogical magazines, and, in addition, he wrote essays of belles-lettres type on conversation, on being human, and on the use of leisure, to mention but a few of the areas that interested him. For his own amusement, Briggs wrote a number of satirical articles in School and Society signing them Quintus H. Flaccus, II. It is interesting to note that in "Latin and the Statistical Method,"[75] Briggs made a correlation between the study of Latin and crime in various states. Ranking the states in arson and murder and ranking them in the number of students studying Latin, he came out with a high coefficient of correlation. Briggs recalled, ". . .one year later two professors of education published the same study seriously."[76]

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[75]Thomas H. Briggs, "Latin and the Statistical Method," School and Society, Vol. 21, January 10, 1925, pp. 51-52.

[76]Interview with Dr. Seyfert.

Other interests. Thomas Briggs brought to the field of secondary education an expansive range of interests, holding pragmatically to the idea that "the end of learning is more learning."[77] Though he wrote a score of books on education, he also composed one on the enjoyment of opera (Opera and Its Enjoyment),[78] and another on poetry (Poetry and Its Enjoyment).[79] Almost every year he re-read the Greek Classics for continual intellectual nourishment, and his personal library was filled with reference works on everything from music to regional geology to plants, animals, and insects - believing that a major purpose of education was to arouse interests that will keep growing.

Active and interested at Teachers College, Columbia University, Briggs was Chairman of the National Congress on Education for Democracy, for which he wrote "A Creed of Democracy,"[80] that was issued by the faculty of Teachers College in 1939. The sixty items in the definition were amplified in the volume, The Meaning of Democracy (1941), and later formed the basis of This Democracy of Ours (1943),

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[77] John L. Childs, American Pragmatism and Education (New York: Holt, 1956), p. 352.

[78] Thomas H. Briggs, Opera and Its Enjoyment (New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, 1960).

[79] Idem, Poetry and Its Enjoyment (New York: Teachers College Bureau of Publications, 1957).

[80] William F. Russell and Thomas H. Briggs, The Meaning of Democracy (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1941), p. 206.

which was published by the United States Department of Justice for use in classes for the education of immigrants. He was also Chairman of the Faculty Advisory Committee to the President from its inception until its retirement. In these same years he was active in several national committees. Among these were the Working Committee of the National Committee on the Reorganization of Secondary Education, which produced "The Cardinal Principles of Secondary Education." With the progressive movement and the democratization of secondary education, the reorganization of secondary education was imperative. After taking note of the changes in society, in secondary school population and in educational and psychological theory, the National Committee listed the main aims of democratic education, outlined the curriculum that should achieve these aims and recommended the adoption of the junior high school.[1] The specific social objectives were grouped and enumerated as follows:[2]

1. Health
2. Command of Fundamentals
3. Citizenship
4. Worthy Use of Leisure

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[1] Koos, The Junior High School, pp. 363-365.

[2] "Cardinal Principles of Secondary Education," United States Bureau of Education, Bulletin No. 35, Washington, United States Government Printing Office, 1918.

5. Vocations

6. Worthy Home Membership

7. Ethical Character

Crucial to the formulation of the committee's report was the philosophy of Herbert Spencer (1820-1903), a leading English educator in the social Darwinist tradition. The committee's 1918 "Cardinal Principles" followed Spencer's functional use of subject matter to serve aims based on life needs. Previous attempts to reorganize secondary education, such as the effort by the Committee of Ten in 1893, attempted to rearrange existing patterns of subject matter. The blending of life and activity aims and subject matter in curriculum was an innovation to the field of secondary education in 1918.[83]

In 1917[84], Dr. Briggs, helped to found the National Association of Secondary School Principals, which presently has over 30,000 members (in 1971 Briggs was the only survivor of the group that organized the original National Association of Secondary School Principals). This association was a National Education Association department formed as an offshoot of the Department of Superintendence in 1916.[85] During this same period Briggs had also served in the capa-

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[83]Cremin, The Transformation of the School, pp. 91-94.

[84]President John F. Kennedy was born in this year.

[85]Krug, The Shaping of the American High School, p. 438.

city of Director of the Speyer School, an experimental junior high school in New York City.[86] Deeper examinations of these facets of Briggs' career will be probed in the following chapters.

After his retirement in 1942, Briggs' drive for meaningful education took a special form. He became especially interested in education regarding the American economy. To do something about this he organized and directed the Consumer Education Study[87] and later served as Chairman of the Board of the Council for the advancement of Secondary Education, thus initiating the great drive toward economic literacy which has gained momentum ever since.

In this chapter a general profile of Thomas Briggs has been presented. The inter-relationship of his early history combined with early influences, both positive and negative, were examined; the paths of his formal education and teaching experiences were observed; leadership qualities were demonstrated in the formation of the Briggs Club; the evolvement of his literary style was followed from its

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[86] Wilhelms, Briggs Club, p. 9.

[87] Excerpts from the report were published in The Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary School Principals, Vol. 28, pp. 87-95, November 1944; also Vol. 31, pp. 175-185, April 1947. In addition the article "The Consumer Education Study," appeared in Social Education, Vol. 11, pp. 249-251, October, 1947.

embryonic state to full maturation.

Chapter III will focus on an important contribution that Dr. Briggs gave to the field of secondary education. This contribution took the form of a guiding principle called the "Golden Rules of Education." Theory and proposed application, a two-part study, will be examined; the development of the "golden rules" is enriched by a preliminary investigation of the curriculum, a basic problem. The chapter concludes with a proposed, partial solution to the curriculum problem: A Curriculum Research Laboratory.

CHAPTER III

BRIGGS: THE GOLDEN RULES OF EDUCATION

Foundations. Educational leaders, such as Thomas Briggs, have not only formulated a professional point of view and technique, but also, perhaps unconsciously, veveloped a social philosophy.[1] The social philosophy that develops is influenced by factors, such as the time and place in which they have lived, the class to which they have belonged, the stream of ideas pertaining to them, and the social and economic stresses that have stirred their interests and awakened their sympathies or aversions. These factors, combined with their own personal temperaments, have not only conditioned their social thinking, but have also provided them with standards of judgment.[2]

Briggs' encounters with his contemporary educators was not just an intellectual venture, but a deep personal involvement in his seeking a rational and personal fulfillment for a philosophical base. In the first three decades of the twentieth century, in his pedagogical environment, many developing academicians in the educational setting of

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[1]Norman Woelfel, Molders of the American Mind (New York: Columbia University Press, 1933, Introduction.

[2]Merle Curti, The Social Ideas of American Educators (Patterson, New Jersey: Pageant Books, Inc., 1959), p. xv.

Teachers College, Columbia University, were searching for an interpretation of their own intellectual labels and personal positions. Teachers College was humming with activity. Practioners versus theorists. Theorists looking for application of practical methods. Practioners implementing programs for social change. Times were changing. Conservative trends were running counter to the progressive waves. The change was not always apparent to those immersed in the swirl of the changing social scene.

James Earl Russell, Dean of the School of Education, Columbia University, had an unusual ability to attract talent to Teachers College and created a setting in which they developed. By World War I he had attracted Paul Monroe whose pioneer research led to the opening of the field of educational history. John Dewey, steeped in the influence of George Morris, left the University of Chicago in 1904, and arrived at Columbia in the same year. He stayed at Teachers College until 1930. Edward L. Thorndike, a colleague of Briggs at Teachers College whose early research dominated the field of educational psychology, was present, as was William Chandler Bagley who considered himself an opponent of progressive education.[3] The social analysis of George Counts, who came to Teachers College in 1927, was

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[3]Cremin, The Transformation of the School, p. 191; also ref. noted in: Wm. Bagley and Stephen Colvin, Human Behavior (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1929), p. 320.

in the forefront of the criticism of progressivism as evidenced by his address at the Progressive Association Convention in 1932 entitled: "Dare Progressive Education to be Progressive."[4]

Other luminaries, such as Paul Mort, Professor of Finance at Columbia, Isaac Kandel, Professor of Secondary Education, David Snedden, educational sociologist at Teachers College, were in residence. William Heard Kilpatrick, the "million dollar professor," attempted to make John Dewey's ideas manageable for the teaching profession as a whole. Kilpatrick espoused the child-centered progressive viewpoint, that is, a need for school to stress the development of character and personality with special attention given to the individual in a "learning-by-doing" environment.[5] David Snedden, who popularized education for social efficiency, resided among a small enclave of Teachers College personnel. Snedden's next-door neighbors were the Paul Monroes (educational history), and the Thomas Briggses; within two or three blocks were the Frank McMurrys (he was one of the leaders of the American Herbartian movement), the James Hosics (Professor of English), and the Harold Ruggses (he later was

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[4]Cremin, The Transformation of the School, p. 191.

[5]Note: At Ohio State, Boyd Henry Bode, head of the philosophy department from 1921 to 1944, resembled more the spirit of Dewey in his teachings than Kilpatrick.
Ibid., p. 221.

Director of Research for the Lincoln School of Columbia University.)[6]

In this fertile climate of Teachers College Briggs began to crystallize his thinking. From this base in the early 1930s came forth a personal and pragmatic need to formulate an approach to education that would be a force in the academic perspective. To Briggs it was paramount to develop society's needs, rather than an abstract interpretation of a philosophy of education.

In a slow evolutionary process, Briggs' promulgation of the Golden Rules takes place. Dean Russell claimed Briggs had the most objective mind on the Teachers College faculty.[7] A close look at these rules, that is, theory in application, is warranted to understand Briggs' evolving strength as an educator in the 1930s.

The fundamental problem in education is, and has been the curriculum.[8] Dr. Fred T. Wilhelms, former student of Briggs and recently retired (1973) executive secretary of the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, echoed Dr. Briggs' sentiments when he stated, "I have written out of a profound conviction that the greatest weak-

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[6]Walter H. Drost, David Snedden and Education for Social Efficiency (Madison, Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1967), p. 142.

[7]Taped interview with Dr. W. Seyfret.

[8]Briggs, Secondary Education, p. 323.

ness of the school is a curriculum accumulated out of generations of looking only at criteria of content; the only true criteria are criteria of purpose."[9] Dr. Wilhelms believed that two purposes stand out so urgently in the educational crisis that whatever superfluous academic ornaments can be sacrificed, should be. Wilhelms' two major purposes were:

1. To go straight to the great social problems of the day, and equip each young person to help solve them and take our society to a new ground.

2. To go straight to the full potentiation of each young person, helping him as much as we can in his own personal becoming.[10]

"All the rest," stated Wilhelms, "is ancillary."[11]

Dr. Briggs viewed curriculum as the keystone in the educational arch. The Golden Rules of Education, as a guiding, fundamental principle developed by Dr. Briggs served as the building-block adjacent to the keystone on the right. The Great Investment Theory of Secondary Education, a working principle developed by Dr. Briggs served as the building-block adjacent to the keystone on the left. Together these building-blocks, Dr. Briggs theorized, would

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[9]Fred T. Wilhelms, "Tomorrow's Assignment," The Future of Education: 1975-2000 (Pacific Palisades, Calif.: Goodyear Publishing Company, Inc., 1974), pp. 227-228.

[10]Ibid.

[11]Ibid.

help alleviate the problem of curriculum.

This chapter will consist of a brief history of curriculum problems and modes of coping with them, a tracing of the development of Briggs' "golden rules," and a sketch of a curriculum reform measure: The Curriculum Research Laboratory.

Over two hundred years ago a unique American educational institution came into being to help cope with the problem of curriculum. Benjamin Franklin, an ardent educational leader, recognized that existing Latin grammar schools had been designed with a strict traditional and classical curriculum, and were primarily college preparatory in nature. These schools were the first form of secondary schools in the colonies; the first one being established in Boston, Massachusetts, only five years after colonists settled in that area (1635).[12] At that time Harvard was the only university in existence in the colonies. Needless to say, a very small percentage of children attended the Latin grammar schools for very few were interested in attending college. As late as 1785, there were only two schools of this type existing in Boston, and the combined enrollment in the two Latin grammar schools was only

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[12]John D. Russell and Charles H. Judd, The American Educational System (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1940), pp. 38-39.

sixty-four boys.[13]

By the middle of the eighteenth century there was a considerable need for more and better trained workers. At this time the Philadelphia Academy emerged. It was practical in nature and among other things attempted to prepare young men for specific occupations, such as printmaking, carpentry and farming. The proposed expanded curriculum of Franklin's academy, put forth in 1749, was composed of practical subjects aimed at equipping the student for the realities of life.[14]

Franklin's ideas for curriculum were innovative, and from the beginning the curriculum of the academy was influential. However, it must not be thought that such a revolutionary educational program was carried out as proposed. Tradition was strong. Even though the old, narrow curriculum, which appeared to be unsatisfactory, was outmoded, it was easier for those who had to administer and teach to continue practices and to use books with which they were familar than to invent new ones.[15] Michael Katz, historian, stated, "As it is being rediscovered, America's

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[13]Edward Krug, The Secondary School Curriculum, (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1960), p. 21.

[14]For an example of Franklin's curriculum see appendix, pp. 253-254.

[15]Briggs, Secondary Education, p. 78.

educational past seems more depressing than uplifting. For much of it is an unpleasant record of insensitivity and bias, or a dreary tale of innovations that did not reach their goals."[16]

By juxtaposing the educational problems of Franklin's time with a modern day overview, it is obvious that no curriculum can be static and continuously effective. It has been suggested that curriculum requirements should be justified in terms of the future:

> Should all children be required to study algebra? Might not they benefit more from studying probability? Logic? Computer programming? Philosophy? Aesthetics? Mass communications? . . .Why, for example, must teaching be organized around such fixed disciplines as English, economics, mathematics or biology? Why not around stages of the human life cycle: a course on birth, childhood adolescence, marriage, career, retirement or death? . . .or around countless other imaginable alternatives?. . .the present curriculum is a mindless holdover from the past.[17]

Although agreement on the kinds of schools needed is still something less than unanimous, taxpayers, parents and educators do tend to agree that the schools are less effective than they ought to be.[18] Curriculum relevancy was a problem in the days of Benjamin Franklin; American education

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[16]Michael B. Katz, ed., School Reform: Past and Present (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1971), p. 1.

[17]A. Toffler, Future Shock (New York: Random House, Inc., 1970), p. 410.

[18]John H. Fischer, "Who Needs Schools?," Saturday Review, September 19, 1970, pp. 78-79.

does not seem to be responding as it should be to the curriculum challenge of modern society.

Educational literature is filled with terms such as "dynamic curricula," "a changing social order," and "an emerging civilization" giving credence to the need for curriculum adjustment to life as it is and as it may be.[19] There has been much discussion as to whether the school, to be effective, should merely adjust students to life as it is or should undertake to educate them to remold civilization.[20] Briggs felt the school did neither adequately and should perhaps do both; his feelings were clearly stated when, in 1933, he commented "the school cannot do the former until the significant characteristics of society are indicated by the most careful studies of competent men, and it is dangerous to attempt the latter unless there is general agreement as to the ideals that should be taught."[21]

Irrelevancy in the curriculum is not a desired characteristic of any school program - a curriculum irrelevant to the times, to the needs of society and to the lives of those who are required to study it. The quest for relevancy of life's meaning was the driving force that propelled

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[19]Briggs, Secondary Education, p. 112.

[20]Ibid., p. 113.

[21]Thomas Henry Briggs, "Propaganda and the Curriculum," Teachers College Record, March 1933, pp. 468-470. See Wm. F. Russell's Curriculum Chart, pp. 249-250.

Thomas Briggs all the days of his professional life. When he was a young man he was asked to substitute for a colleague in the English department who had become ill. He accepted the challenge with alacrity. Briggs was seriously concerned with grammar and everything that had to do with the subleties of language. But, as a concerned educator, he grew doubtful whether what he was teaching was having any worthwhile effect. Briggs conducted a study which convinced him that it was not, as a result he changed his teaching. The changes he made were in accord with his whole philosophy, for Thomas Briggs believed that education should always be doing something, meaning something, i.e., functioning.[22] The phrase "education that functions" does not necessarily denote "practicality." If instruction in ballet gives a child an enriched sensitivity to beauty, that may not be "practical" in the usual sense. But that ballet instruction is functioning, Briggs felt, as importantly as other courses that perhaps teach a skill. The insistence on function has been the basic drive of Briggs' entire career. In all his teaching, in his training of administrators, he attempted to pattern everything toward this one fundamental goal.

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[22]Fred T. Wilhelms, "To Fish or Cut Bait," Briggs Club, 1968, p. 27.

The Golden Rules of Education, rooted in the pragmatic philosophy and encompassing Briggs' value beliefs, was one such theory that was meant to function. It has been said that men should establish their values in the same way that they establish the truth of their ideas. They should allow the intelligence to impartially consider the problems of human affairs, and to select the values that seem most likely to resolve them.[23] In capsule form, this is the philosophical application made by Thomas Briggs in the formulation of his "golden rules". . ."values should not be imposed on us by a higher authority."[24]

Tracing the lineage of the "golden rules," one must return to the early portion of Briggs' career. It was then that Thomas Briggs prepared what was a directive, and workable principle contributing to his philosophy of secondary education. It was not so much a description as marking out a promising outline for future development. Briggs noted that, even though much of the old curriculum still remained, there was ". . .a weakened and weakening faith in it."[25] Educational leaders, especially those in secondary schools had not been successful in proposing a

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[23]William Heard Kilpatrick, Philosophy of Education (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1951), p. 306.

[24]Ibid., p. 426.

[25]Briggs, Secondary Education, p. 258.

"positive common understanding of what the school is actually intended to accomplish."[26] If one is attempting constructive thinking about what the education of children ought to be, one might imagine himself with the Swiss Family Robinson cast away on an island with only such equipment as he has been able to rescue from the wrecked ship. The salvage is temporarily stowed away; the children have gone to sleep; and father and mother sit by the fire to plan what education they can give in the situation they find themselves. There are no school inspectors to explain what is required; colleges are a remote possibility; and no "authorities" can be consulted for their views.[27] What concept of education would guide them? They would have to begin with a definition of education; one that is "clear, sound, comprehensive, adaptable, pragmatic and indicative of what is possible."[28]

Restrictions, of one sort or another, do exist in almost every school. Schoolmen have become accustomed to cite these restrictions as excuses for failure to improve the education offered, rather than as challenges to be

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[26]Thomas Henry Briggs, Secondary Education (revised) (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1950), p. 173.

[27]Taped interview with Dr. Warren C. Seyfert.

[28]Thomas Henry Briggs, Improving Instruction (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1938), p. 216.

accepted.[29] As Robert Hutchins, former president of the University of Chicago, so well put it:

> . . . thinking is hard work. In America the problems presented have been so serious that American educators may perhaps be forgiven their reluctance to face the question of what the system is for, and how it is to accomplish its purposes...
>
> Everytime educators address themselves on the subject of education in America, they urge one another to redouble their efforts and forget their aims.[30]

The challenge to create an ideal program of education is not unique. For example, in the Summer of 1932, the Barstow Foundation sent a commission to plan for the education of the natives in American Samoa. The natives there were experiencing tumult as a result of change from primitive ways to the modern modes of Western civilization:

> Samoa, a country tropical in its climate and in the abundance of its accessible food and its ease of life; primitive in tools and material culture, and highly organized in its ceremonial and social customs. The people had worked out a way of life, in their opinion, admirable adapted to their environment which provided them with enough to suffice their needs and offered abundant satisfactions in personal and social expression, though this was very different from what we are accustomed to in our country. The natives had tools similar to those in northern Europe two thousand years ago. In some of the islands no wheel of any kind has ever turned. They lacked the concepts of math

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[29]Ibid., p. 213.

[30]Robert M. Hutchins, The Conflict in Education (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1953), pp. 54-55.

> and the formulation of science;. . .in fact, they were innocent of understanding that these secrets are obtainable and usable by man. The people could not read, and of course there were no newspapers or books...there was an elaborate gradation of social standing that ran from highest chiefs down to untitled menials, an order which depended primarily on heredity, but in which men and families moved up or down the scale on current merit and achievement. [31]

Assuming that the facts given above adequately characterize the situation, how would one, as a member of such a commission begin to formulate the program needed? As far as Briggs was concerned, the procedure that one would use in Samoa or in a Swiss Family Robinson situation was the same procedure that one should use for formulating the kind of school program that is needed in the United States.[32]

The beginning point in such a procedure is to have a clear definition of education. The definition must be "sound, comprehensive, adaptable, pragmatic and indicative of what is possible."[33] Once having set a goal and armed with a working definition, the imagination is free from outmoded traditions, free from imposed rule of "authorities," - free to construct positive ideas and/or programs.

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[31]Noted by Briggs in taped interview with Dr. Seyfert, August 1964, ref: "A New School in American Samoa," Julius Rosenwald Fund, Chicago, 1932.

[32]Briggs, Improving Instruction, p. 215.

[33]Ibid.

In the research that guided Dr. Briggs to the formulation of his "golden rules," he noted that it was too often the case that teachers, and even principals, did not want freedom and opportunity preferring to be told by some authority just what they ought to attempt and how.[34] Perhaps it is a human weakness to cling to traditional methods when presented such freedom. However..."he who refuses to embrace a unique opportunity loses the prize as surely as if he tried and failed."[35]

It was Dr. Briggs' opinion that there was accelerated desire for authority - "some Moses who will bring down from Sinai a program that can be unquestioningly accepted."[36] Dr. Briggs, in a taped interview with Dr. Seyfert of the Washington office of the National Association of Secondary School Principals, related the following illustration:

> As society became more, and more complex, authoritative decisions seemed to be necessary. The heads of families were in larger matters overruled by the chief of the tribe, and he in turn as the size of the group increased was made subordinate to a king. But all the way up the line somebody told what was to be done, judged of right and wrong, and meted out rewards and punishments.
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> When there was a conflict of judgments or opinion, that of the stronger ruler dominated. History clearly shows that under such a system civilization developed slowly, and it reports that inevitably there was rebellion by those who

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[34] Ibid.

[35] William James, "Reflex Action and Theism," The Will to Believe, pp. 122-124, quoted in The Philosophy of William James (New York: The Modern Library, 1925), p. 160.

[36] Briggs, Secondary Education, p. 258.

were deprived of the privilege of making decisions for themselves.

It was the conflicts among the Israelites, who refused to recognize the authority of Moses, that drove him up the cloud-capped mountain for final direction from Jehovah. When Moses descended with the tablets of stone on which the finger of God had inscribed the ten commandments, the people had gotten the authority that they wanted and the possibility of future conflicts seemed to be at an end - but, it was not. Although the definite commandments were accepted as authoritative by all the tribes, they did not satisfactorily furnish the guidance that was needed.

In the first place, they were mostly negative... they told what not to do rather than what was permissible or approved. And in the second place, they concerned few of the problems of conduct that were met daily. Moreover, difficulties of interpretation soon arose - how much work could one do and still keep the Sabbath holy? exactly what was reverence for one's parents? And, being accustomed to 'authorities,' the people demanded answers to such questions, and there developed the Scribes and later the Pharisees (who made a specialty of precedents). The inevitable result was formalism - concern with the letter of the law rather than the spirit.

The world got into a sad mess whenever it attempted to determine what ethical conduct should be by setting up numerous definite rules of conduct - rules that had validity in many situations and little or none in others.

In this case, sometimes the authority was disputed; often official interpretation was denied; and usually the entire spirit of the law was lost. It was just such a situation that confronted a Great Teacher, who was concerned with character and who realized that character could not develop without guidance from within. Deprecating none of the ten commandments, He supplemented them with another: Do unto others as you would have others do unto you.

No sooner was this new commandment proposed than the formalists attacked it. They undoubtly said that it lacked authority, violated the established

> law, was not sufficiently definite; in short, it would never do because it impeached their own official influence. But the Master, concerned with growth in character rather than alone with conduct, which might be formal and insignificant, simply insisted that the new rule be tried. It has become not only the most satisfactory guide to conduct ever devised, but also the most potent stimulus to the development of strong and growing character.[37]

In a similar manner Dr. Briggs saw the need for a guiding principle in education. In all literature concerning education there are many attempts to define purposes. These are so great in number and so varied in their emphases as to suggest that each person must find and/or formulate a statement of unique value to himself. Briggs believed that the most helpful statement, like the Golden Rule for moral conduct, will not "restrict initiative and individuality by undue detail, but will rather guide by large principles, throwing on each individual the burden of responsibility for interpretation and for action."[38]

It was Thomas Briggs' feeling that "no authoritative imposed directions for education could long continue to be satisfactory."[39] In the first place, it would be difficult to agree on the "authorities" who would indicate

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[37]Taped interview with Dr. Seyfert; also ref. noted in T. H. Briggs, Pragmatism and Pedagogy (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1940), pp. 11-13.

[38]Thomas H. Briggs, The Junior High School (Cambridge: The Riverside Press, 1920), p. 157.

[39]Idem, Improving Instruction, p. 218.

what schools should do. If such "authorities" could be found, those who are entirely confident in their own minds that certain procedures are best for the education of all children everywhere, their suggestions would be rejected by many, probably the majority of teachers, who would not be in agreement with the authorities' competence to say with finality what should be taught.[40] Secondly, the interpretations of suggestions, however definite, would vary so much that they would bring about continued conflicting alternatives which already exist. In the third place, conditions vary from community to community, from school to school, from room to room, and from day to day, so that what might seem wise in theory would need to be modified for each peculiar situation in general practice. As a matter of fact, the same procedures under various conditions would produce different results[41]. . ."similar reactions are not expected when sulphuric acid combines with different bases."[42] Briggs was aware that working under orders given from without never results in the inner growth that is recognized as essential for professional competence. He concluded that the idea of direction of education by "authorities" is not

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[40]Thomas Henry Briggs, Are You Educated About Education?, (unpublished, 1966), Chap. 5, p. 7.

[41]Idem, Improving Instruction, p. 218.

[42]Ibid.

only bad; it is also impracticable.[43]

Dr. Briggs was cognizant of the fact that we do not yet possess a full understanding of our society and of its ideals; consequently philosophies of education, even those that are carefully thought through, must be tentative and to a degree contradictory and incomplete. He postulated that educators "need a concept of education that will be usable under any conditions, anywhere, and with helpfulness in promoting any accepted ideals."[44]

Such was the case in 1915 when Thomas Briggs was transferred from teaching a single subject to teaching secondary education, of which he know no more than most teachers of a single, isolated subject. He was challenged to find a definition of education. This had never concerned him before. Consulting definitions which had been proposed for education, he found none which helped him to formulate a program for his new responsibility. He was, therefore, forced to invention. "Inveniam Viam Aut Faciam:"[45] A true leader will find a way or he will invent one.

It occurred to Briggs that one should try the impossible and put oneself in the frame of mind of

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[43] Ibid.

[44] Ibid., p. 219.

[45] Briggs Club, p. 17.

Benjamin Franklin when he was formulating his educational proposal, or the Swiss Family Robinson when they were trying to plan what education they could give in their circumstances; i.e., begin thinking by trying to forget all that exists in current programs, and decide primarily what should be taught.

Facing the necessity, Thomas Briggs came up with what he fancifully called the Golden Rules of Education.[46] This principle helped Dr. Briggs develop courses in secondary education and he felt that it would help anyone who tried to think independently and creatively about what education should do. "Abstract theory has given way to pragmatism."[47]

The Golden Rules of Education - Part I

> THE FIRST DUTY OF A SCHOOL IS TO TEACH PEOPLE TO DO BETTER THE DESIRABLE THINGS THAT THEY WILL DO ANYWAY.[48]

The first Golden Rule of Education sounds so simple that its implications are easily overlooked. It is difficult to realize the changes in educational practices that would materialize with application of the

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[46] Taped interview with Dr. Seyfert.

[47] Briggs, Secondary Education, p. 258.

[48] Idem, Secondary Education (revised ed.), p. 173.

"golden rule."

Dr. Briggs conducted a "golden rule" experiment with his secondary education students while teaching at Columbia University. He presented the principle to the students for examination. They approved the statement. Briggs then asked if they could formulate questions, the answers to which would make the theory work in practice, but. . ."seldom could any of them fathom appropriate questions to make the rule effective."[49] The challenges related to the principle are many and difficult. "It is undeniably clear: it (the statement) throws responsibility on everyone concerned with education; and it is adaptable to every situation at any time and to every community."[50]

Dr. Briggs believed that in order to apply the proposal, the three following questions must be answered:

1. What are the children whom I am to teach likely to do, both now in their daily lives, and later, whether they continue in school or not?

2. Are these activities desirable, or relatively desirable?

3. How can the children be taught to do <u>better</u> what they are likely to do anyway? [51]

With regard to question one, "what will pupils do?" - the best means of determining what any given group

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[49]Idem, "A Philosophy of Secondary Education Today," <u>Teachers College Record</u>, Vol. 36, April 1935, p. 601.

[50]Idem, <u>Secondary Education</u>, p. 258. [51]Ibid.

of pupils will do in the future is to first consider what they are doing in the present; and second, what are the adults, such as they are likely to become, older brothers and sisters, for example, doing now.[52] Briggs realized that a certain degree of misjudgment will occur in making such predictions, however, it is not likely to be as large as that made by remote "authorities" who are not familiar with the individual pupils or with the environment in which they live.[53]

The task of forecasting the future is a difficult one shunned by most people. But someone must look into the future; every textbook writer, every course maker, every teacher in his or her daily work does make forecasts, whether aware of it or not. The inevitable answer to who is best able to make this prediction imposes a great resonsibility on the teacher.[54]

The procedure for determining what pupils will possibly do now and in the future is fairly simple and, Briggs felt, "would be approved by every person of common sense."[55] First, list the things that students are most

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[52]Briggs, Improving Instruction, p. 220.

[53]Idem, Are You Educated About Education?, p. 9.

[54]Thomas Henry Briggs, ed., The Classroom Teacher, Vol. 10, (Chicago: The Classroom Teacher, Inc., 1927), p.4.

[55]Briggs, "Monosyllables," p. 6.

likely to do, at the present time and in the future. No one can predict, with complete certainty, a new invention or a war, or social or political changes; but it is not difficult to observe what literature is being read, the use of leisure time or to record some of the science that is needed to make life more understandable and safe.[56] Commenting on the function of schools, Briggs stated, "Anything that is actually used, especially in important or frequent actions, is a concern of education, sometimes to eradicate, usually to improve; if other agencies are not preparing children for them the school must do so."[57] Some of the activities that would be included on such a list would, in varying degrees, be less certain, some of them - like renting a home - being highly probable; others - like traveling in India, directing a symphony or going to the moon - being so improbable that the secondary school can safely ignore them.[58] A matter of basic importance, Briggs strongly felt that "the first duty of the school is to prepare for doing those things that actually are done in life."[59] A parallel is noted with the ideas of John Dewey who felt that the school was not a preparation for life, but was

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[56]Idem, The Classroom Teacher, p. 5.

[57]Ibid.

[58]Idem, "Monosyllables," p. 6.

[59]Idem, Secondary Education, p. 259.

life itself.[60]

The second question to be asked by one who attempts to use the proposed concept of education is, "What is desirable?" It is difficult to know for sure which activity is the most important and which the least important, even for a well-known individual at a given time.[61] Briggs felt if teachers would attempt to decide which activities are desirable it would make them more competent to consider courses suggested by others; it would also make them better teachers as they would become more conscious of values and more sensitive to them.[62]

In everyday classroom procedures teachers show little hesitation on passing judgment as to relative worths. For example, teachers often say, "I think this is a better way," or "this is a better format." The very core of good teaching is to make these judgments of relative values, and to teach students how to make them.[63]

Briggs does not argue that teachers' judgments are infallible, or that they will always be in agreement: ". . .as a matter of record, the assumption that values are permanent has done ineffable harm to education."[64]

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[60]John Dewey, Democracy and Education (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1916), pp. 99-103

[61]Briggs, Improving Instruction, p. 223.

[62]Idem, Secondary Education, p. 260.

[63]Idem, Improving Instruction, p. 224.

Briggs felt that all phases of the secondary school curriculum should be critically "put to the test" to determine whether or not subjects would pass the criteria he proposed. Briggs stated: "Nothing, either venerable or novel, should be unproved, using the work in its original sense; everything should be reconsidered and evaluated anew; what survives would be the materials of the new education[65].. and education is the key to the new world."[66]

As the essence of good teaching is to make judgments of relative values, and to teach students how to make them, Briggs defines four criteria that every judge of values should use: (1) frequency, (2) cruciality, (3) generality, and (4) permanence.

Regarding frequency: "Other things being equal, the activity of greatest frequency will have the greatest value."[67] Obviously it is more important to know how to care for the common cold than for a rare virus. Or, for example, it is more important to understand our system of government than it is to be able to trace the history of the English parliament in the eighteenth century.

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[65]Ibid.

[66]Idem, "Monosyllables," p. 8.

[67]Bertrand Russell, Education and the Social Order (London: George Allen and Unvin Ltd., 1932), p. 233.

[68]Briggs, Improving Instruction, p. 225.

Briggs' criterion of frequency applies to techniques and to principles, as well as to activities. It was noted that "in every field of learning there are more principles, theories, hypotheses, and techniques than can even be considered, to say nothing of learned, by the most ambitious and competent secondary school students."[69] In 1966, Marshall McLuhan put it well..."There is just too much stuff to learn today."[70] He called it an age of "information overload."[71]

Cruciality is another criterion of values. In this case judgment has to be made on the chances that a need will occur, and also on an estimate of how crucial it might be. Some needs that seldom occur are of major importance because of disastrous effects when they can not be satisfied.[72] Dr. Briggs cited the following example: In a large university it was proposed to construct a part of the curriculum for a drug clerk on the data accumulated from an analysis of a large number of prescriptions filled in various drug stores. From the study of these prescriptions two determinations were made:

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[69]Idem, Are You Educated About Education?, Chap. 7, p. 13.

[70]Battle and Shannon, eds., The New Idea in Education (New York: Harper and Row, 1974), p. 20.

[71]Ibid.

[72]Briggs, Improving Instruction, pp. 225-226.

(1) the frequency of demand for the drugs in stock, and (2) the ordinary duties of the pharmacist. The study of the prescriptions, however, indicated no occurrence of any poisons in dangerous amounts. Because it was considered crucial that a drug clerk should know the common poisons, the symptoms resulting from dangerous doses and the effective antidotes, these were properly added to the course of study.[73] A demand for such knowledge may very seldom occur, but when it does it is crucial.

Dr. Briggs felt that teachers are likely to be unduly influenced by tradition when determining the cruciality of details of knowledge. The unexamined old is no safer or no truer than the unexamined new[74] . . ."it is wrong to assume either that everything new or that everything old is, because of its age, essential or useless."[75]

A third criterion of value is that of generality. Ideally, education should be adapted to the specific abilities, capacities, and likely needs of students as heterogeneous as may be.[76] It is possible in mass instruction to make adaptations for individual students, however, economy demands a great deal of planning for classes as groups.

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[73]Ibid.

[74]Battle and Shannon, New Idea in Education, p. xii.

[75]Briggs, Are You Educated About Education?, p. 16.

[76]Idem, Improving Instruction, p. 228.

Permanence, number four criteria of value: "It is obvious without argument that learning which will continue, usually with increasing effectiveness, to give lasting satisfactions is more important than that which is temporary in value."[77] To Dr. Briggs' way of thinking it was more important to know and appreciate the symphonies of Mozart and the sculptures of Rodin and the edifices of Pompeii than the gyrations of modern dance, or the sand castles on the beach at Newport.[78] The reason, Briggs felt, is that some knowledge has general and permanent values, while other knowledge has values that are only specific and temporary for the majority of people. There was no intention, on Briggs' part, of deprecating the specific and the temporary - that has justifications of its own. He felt much of it should be taught, but with awareness of what it is and of how it is preliminary to learning those things that will give more general and more lasting satisfactions.[79]

Briggs suggested that with these four criteria one can develop not only a greater amount of competence to judge the values of what is in a curriculum, or what may be proposed for it, but also respect for one's own judgment

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[77]Ibid., p. 229.

[78]Ibid., p. 228.

[79]Briggs, Are You Educated About Education?, p. 18; also ref. noted in taped interview (N.E.A. tape).

and confidence to act on them.[80] Briggs stated: "The judgments of others, who are more learned or more experienced, should be approved only when the supporting reasons are convincing."[81] The growth factor, Dr. Briggs indicated, stems from the ability to learn to judge relative values for oneself, follow such convictions resolutely - even to the point of a firm break with tradition - and professional growth will occur. Conversely, those who shrink from the responsibility, who depend on "authorities" (whose weight usually increases with the distance from the activity), and those who wince from teaching what their intelligence indicates, at best, can never amount to more than "artisans in the profession."[82]

The third and final question that must be asked in order to apply the first "golden rule" is, how do we do these things better than they would be done without instruction? The ideal is a perfect performance, but improvement is the immediate challenge.[83] Briggs cautioned, "...the teacher should reveal better practices gradually, presenting only what can be accomplished by the students with their maturity and interest; the movement to teach

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[80]Briggs, Improving Instruction, p. 230.

[81]Ibid.

[82]Ibid.

[83]Idem, Secondary Education, p. 260.

children to study has often failed because too much was attempted at a time."[84]

This mode of teaching places the emphasis on assured rather than on contingent needs. Briggs felt that education cannot possibly prepare an individual for everything that might happen..."an attempt to do so results in superficial learning". . .or of the ridiculous situation of the White Knight who set out upon his journey with a mouse trap because he might need to catch a mouse, and the foolish Knight had never even learned to stay on his horse:

> 'But you've got a bee-hive, or something like one fastened to the saddle,' said Alice. 'Yes, it's a very good bee-hive,' the Knight said in a discontented tone, 'one of the best kind. But not a single bee has come near it yet. And the other thing is a mouse trap. I suppose the mice keep the bees out, or the bees keep the mice out, I don't know which.'
>
> I was wondering what the mouse trap was for,' said Alice. 'It isn't very likely that there would be any mice on the horses back.'
>
> 'Not very likely, perhaps,' said the Knight; 'but if they do come, I don't choose to have them running all about. You see,' he went on after a pause, 'it's as well to be provided for everything. That's the reason the horse has all those anklets round his feet.'
>
> 'But what are they for?' Alice asked in a tone of great curiosity.
>
> 'To guard against the bites of sharks,' the Knight replied.[85]

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[84]Idem, The Classroom Teacher, p. 6.

[85]Lewis Carroll, Through the Looking Glass, as noted in Briggs, Secondary Education, p. 261.

The author tends to concur with Dr. Briggs who stated, "only after there is preparation for the most probable and important needs is there time for the contingent needs - those that may occur."[86] The principle proposed for determining the first duty of the school, i.e., preparing for those things that are actually done in life, would result in "revolutionary changes, not so much perhaps, in the addition or elimination of subjects as in a perception of the importance of many details now largely neglected."[87]

The second portion of Dr. Briggs' "golden rules" will now be examined. The Golden Rules of Education - Part I: The first duty of a school is to teach people to do <u>better</u> the desirable things that they will do anyway - must always be complemented by the following:

<u>The Golden Rules of Education - Part II</u>

ANOTHER DUTY OF THE SCHOOL IS TO REVEAL HIGHER ACTIVITIES AND TO MAKE THEM BOTH DESIRED AND MAXIMALLY POSSIBLE.[88]

This principle needs the same careful analysis and independent application as the first one. Part II

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[86]Briggs, <u>Secondary Education</u>, p. 262.

[87]Ibid.

[88]Ibid.

of the "golden rules" assumed that education is a "leading on," that education is never completed, in school or outside, indeed "the end of learning is more learning."[89] This common sense approach guides, but does not restrict, educators who are ready to assume responsibility for a share in developing an educational program in which they believe.[90]

Dr. Briggs felt that the application of Part II should not await the completion of the first challenge, but that the two should be attempted together - emphasis of the second part increasing with the development of the students. As an example, art appreciation, illustrative of a higher activity, should be introduced to students in such a way as to make it desirable; the means of appreciation has to be taught so that full enjoyment is possible.[91] In the conventional curriculum, dealing with such subjects as English, social studies and arithmetic, the teachers should begin by asking what are the desirable and possible activities contained within these subjects? What are the higher types of literature that people, unguided, will read? What are better and more effective ways of reading

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[89]Childs, American Pragmatism and Education, p. 352.

[90]Briggs, Improving Instruction, p. 321.

[91]Ibid., p. 232.

for enjoyment and benefit?[92]

In dealing with this principle, Briggs suggested that educators should be prepared to supplement existing curricula with additions of their own. Those who are desirous to extend the curriculum beyond traditional subject matter, and perhaps do away with the latter altogether, may supplement the procedure by listing higher activities of various types regardless of their relation to traditional subjects.[93] Perhaps a study of an ecological problem, or actually examining the working habits of a successful community leader, or a review of current theatrical plays would open an unexplored area of interest to the student.

Too often schools fail to take the responsibility for making higher activities or studies desired.[94] They might reveal higher literature, for example, or literature that in the teacher's opinion is higher, and then the student reverts to reading the comic supplements. He does not care for Shakespeare any more. Dr. Briggs continually returned to the point of why, what is the reason that the schools do not take the responsibility of making things desired, as well as known about.[95]

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[92]Ibid.

[93]Ibid.

[94]Taped interview with Dr. Seyfert.

[95]Ibid.

Briggs felt that refinement in encouraging lasting academic interest is a largely neglected field, as evidenced by the traditional bonfire at the end of a school year when the students burn their textbooks, or sell them to a second-hand store. They are as much as saying, "We have had it - we have endured the ordeal of a school year... we don't want to bother with that anymore."[96] When students come to appreciate the importance of higher activities - in behavior, in reading literature, in enjoying music, in effecting better relations with other people - Briggs felt teaching will become relatively simple..."it will require merely guidance of those who want to learn because they appreciate the value to their own development, immediately or in the probable future, of being skilled to carry on satisfactorily revealed higher activities."[97]

Thomas Briggs realized that for best results we must have educators with wide experience and with infectious enthusiasm.[98] He wrote, "The contagion of enthusiasm is probably the most important means of stimulating interest."[99] Without enthusiasm the teacher can become at best a skillful technician - clear in exposition and vigor-

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[96]Ibid.

[97]Briggs, "Monosyllables," p. 9.

[98]Ibid.

[99]Idem, Improving Instruction, p. 235.

ous in drills, but lacking that divine spark which inflames others to emulation and to persisting activity.[100] William James commented: ". . .some interest in each of these things arises in everybody at the proper age, but, if not persistently fed with the appropriate matter, instead of growing into a powerful and necessary habit, it atrophies and dies - choked by the rival interests to which the daily food is given."[101]

Alfred North Whitehead was in agreement with Briggs and James in regard to the theory of enthusiasm: ". . .education should have as its aim not the accumulation of knowledge, but wisdom; a comprehension of the art of life. . .this means keeping alive the child's sense of adventure, of novelty, of freshness. . ."[102]

Dr. Briggs made an interesting observation. After years of doing difficult, disagreeable and compulsory tasks in school, the majority of people cease doing these tasks when they are on their own; all that remains is the intention of making similar requirements of their own children. Briggs, commenting on this behavior pattern, stated: "It does

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[100]Taped interview with Dr. Seyfert.

[101]William James, The Philosophy of William James (New York: The Modern Library, 1925), p. 201.

[102]Alfred North Whitehead, The Aims of Education and Other Essays (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1929), p. 58.

not reflect credit on the human intellect."[103]

Several decades ago Dr. Briggs suggested as one solution to the curriculum problem, the establishment of a curriculum research laboratory. It would be, "as well stocked as the laboratories of Bell Telephone, General Electric; and staffed, on a permanent basis by the best intellects that could possibly be procured."[104] Briggs felt that the era of having program matter decided by committees in the interstices of annual conventions was gone.

Such a laboratory would begin with the acceptance of certain definitions; certain principles. If it does not begin there. . ."its work will be futile."[105] Research would be done on these definitions and principles to interpret them - breaking them down into practical details which would, in turn, be given to curriculum makers, textbook writers, and schools to select in terms of relative values for their communities. For example, Spanish is much more important in Texas than it is in Maine, and French is more important in Maine than it is in Texas. Therefore, these things could be interpreted in terms of local conditions, giving the local teachers and admin-

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[103]Briggs, Improving Instruction, p. 236.

[104]Idea of the Curriculum Research Laboratory is discussed fully in taped interview with Dr. Seyfert.

[105]Taped interview with Dr. Seyfert.

istrators all the necessary freedom to make these curriculum decisions.

The concept of the developmental engineer is another step in the curriculum laboratory idea Briggs proposed. Dr. Briggs was aware that industry employs high grade, able people on a permanent basis to sit in top-floor, cubicles to do the abstract thinking. They draw blueprints and go on to the mixing of chemicals in test tubes; but they do not immediately begin to manufacture the product.

Downstairs they have what is called a developmental engineer. His job is to make work in a vat what works upstairs in a test tube, and to remove the "bugs" from the theoretical material. He knows the machinery that is available, he knows the workers (teachers); their prejudices, their capabilities, their adaptabilities. He knows a great deal more about the process than the top-floor inventor knows.

And so the developmental engineer translates the theory into practical programs, with the help of his workers. As a "suggestion box" the workers tell what will save time or what will save materials, or how to improve the product. And with the help of the workers the developmental engineer makes a practical program for that particular school, or particular room or particular subject matter - whatever the case may be.

He has to be expertly trained so that he can evaluate and understand what the inventors have proposed. He evaluates the research and makes it known to the administrators and to the community. The developmental engineer makes suggestions as to what can be adopted, and then, with the help of others draws up the local program.[106]

The persuasive agent for the promotion of industrial research has been and is, competition; the "hurting-in-the-pocket-dollar" syndrome.[107] An analogous situation in the educational field occurred as a result of the Russian launch of Sputnik in 1957, which catapulted the American educational complex into action. The immediate response placed new emphasis on the need for trained manpower to achieve national purposes. The secondary school curriculum was reconstructed subject by subject, particularly with the aid of the original National Defense Education Act of 1958, which stimulated the reconstruction of programs in science, mathematics and world languages.[108]

The usual reason for negating such ideas of curriculum laboratories is that they cannot be afforded. As Briggs pointed out, "They cannot not be afforded; we

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[106]Theoretical idea of "developmental engineer" taken from interview with Dr. Seyfert.

[107]Taped interview with Dr. Seyfert.

[108]William Van Til, ed., Curriculum: Quest for Relevance 2nd ed. (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin Co., 1974), p. 3.

(educators) are dealing with the most important raw material in the world - the human being." He continued: "The human being is far more important than cars or refrigerators, and the cost of the research for this great investment would be but a fraction of what is spent by industry to discover a new floor polish."[109] Briggs noted that industry spends more every year on research than the entire cost of elementary and secondary education in the United States.[110]

It was noted by Briggs that teachers, more than most other people, are interested in new theories that concern their work. In Pragmatism and Pedagogy (1940),[111] he wrote: "Our professional classrooms, platforms and literature are filled with expositions of and arguments, sometimes with evangelicism, for this new theory or that, many of them merely restatements of old theories in the dress of new diction. It may be safely admitted that teachers are on the whole intelligently critical of the theories presented to them."[112] With theory approval, teachers usually reveal their pragmatism, not by indepen-

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[109]Taped interview with Dr. Seyfert.

[110]Figures from MacGraw-Hill as quoted by Briggs in taped interview with Dr. Seyfert.

[111]Thomas Henry Briggs, Pragmatism and Pedagogy (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1940), pp. 10-11.

[112]Ibid.

dently attempting to translate the new theory into practical methods, but by wanting to know where they can observe a working example.[113]

Such was the case with Briggs' "golden rules." There can never be a Moses with a tablet of authoritative rules for the expectant world of education.[114] Briggs knew of authorities. . ."those on facts and on empirically tested theories; but there can be no authority who will answer all of our questions, who will make all of our decisions, for in the last analysis they, as we, have to rely on a philosophy to guide them to reasonable solutions of all problems, especially of those that are new."[115]

Dr. Briggs' attempt to establish a fundamental principle known as the Golden Rules of Education was not futile. The principle of the "golden rules" was incorporated within the two main publications of the Committee on the Re-Orientation of Secondary Education; "Issues of Secondary Education," published in 1936, and "Functions of Secondary Education" published in 1937. These reports represented a fundamental application of the "golden rules."

In the late 1930s the Committee, chaired by Dr. Briggs, was able to employ Dr. Walter Meyer, owner and editor of the American Observer, who spent the entire year of 1938 travel-

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[113]Ibid. [114]Ibid. [115]Ibid.

ing the United States explaining and promoting the work of Briggs' Committee. Although Dr. Meyer was unsuccessful in convincing people to ready their schools for the adoption of the principles in "Issues" and "Functions," the importance of the mission so impressed him that he gave without remuneration an additional year in an effort to effect their implementation.[116] Unfortunately, his nationwide public campaign in school systems was interrupted by the nation's involvement in World War II. Thus, the opportunity of educational leaders to continue their consideration of such educational imperatives ceased. War again interfered with reform.

In summary, it may be said that Dr. Briggs never let up on the strict rule that education must function or fail. If the child who learned to do better the desirable things he would do anyway, did not also envision higher things which had never been in his life pattern to see, then his education was only a training. Briggs understood clearly that education functions most importantly when, often in subtle, mysterious ways, it literally lifts a person above what he was going to be. Briggs believed that the educational process must be a continuous growth: "The habit of education, an eagerness to go on and on in learning through fields that the school has led a little

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[116]Taped interview with Dr. Seyfert.

way into, is the end to be sought. No one is truly educated who does not acquire this attitude and this habit."[117]

In Briggs' view a philosophy is significant only if it directs and stimulates a man to action. Through his principle of the "golden rules," Briggs clarified one segment concerning his ideals of what education should accomplish. He has laid out a guide for those who wish to think for themselves about what should be taught and methods to be used. Briggs' proposed "golden rules" do not indicate exactly what educators should do - instead they place the responsibility of formulating an educational philosophy on the educator, and this, in turn, encourages acceptance of responsibility, independent thought, inventiviness and perseverance.

Thomas Briggs, in his wisdom, realized that the "golden rules" may not prove satisfactory to all who seek help. To some they will not seem adequately definite - for reasons already stated, they were not intended to be definitive or conclusive. In cases where they do not prove helpful, they should not be used; however, some similar concept of education should be established - one that is clear, sound, comprehensive, adaptable and pragmatic. With no philosophy of education to guide one to conclusions, recommendations must be considered not as authoritative,

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[117]Briggs, The Classroom Teacher, p. 7.

but for just what they are, expressions of one's own personal opinion.

Sample exercise. The following are some topics that students using the "golden rules" formulated for inclusion in an educational program. Values (ranging from essential, highly desirable, desirable, negligible, to harmful) were assigned each topic, compared and discussed.

1. To carry on an interesting and profitable conversation.
2. To choose, win and keep friends.
3. To select a suitable mate.
4. To judge a lecture and report it accurately.
5. To know the law that applies to the most commonly occurring difficulties.
6. To select a lawyer, physician or dentist.
7. To buy men's clothes with taste and economy.
8. To read advertisements.
9. To detect and resist propaganda.
10. To select the best type of insurance policy.
11. To invest savings wisely.
12. To plan and get the most out of a trip.
13. To have a hobby.
14. To understand why society provides and controls free education.
15. To know and desire the educational opportunities available after leaving school. [118]

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[118] Briggs, Improving Instruction, p. 242.

Chapter III has dealt with the conception, development and application of Thomas Briggs' Golden Rules of Education, a guiding principle that, if used effectively and positively in the field of secondary education, might have had a dynamic effect. The study of the thesis was enriched by a preliminary examination of curriculum, a key problem, and concluded with a proposed partial solution to the curriculum problem: A Curriculum Research Laboratory.

Chapter IV will present The Great Investment Theory, a concept of education as a social investment. This contribution of Briggs' to secondary education forms the second building-block in his educational arch.

C H A P T E R IV

BRIGGS: THE GREAT INVESTMENT THEORY OF SECONDARY EDUCATION

> People generally have more feeling for canals and roads than education. However, I hope we can advance them with equal pace.
>
> Thomas Jefferson[1]

The 1930s was a decade in American history churned by the social phenomena of the Great Depression. The societal dislocations effected by this industrial-economic collapse were to last nearly a full decade. It was basically an international breakdown of the system of distribution of the abundance of goods and wealth. Since the effects of the depression rose out of artificial causes rather than natural ones an amelioration of the situation called for aggressive governmental action. In the midst of this economic collapse Americans built a distrust for big business and industry. The "Return to Normalcy" stance of President Harding, the "The Business of Government is Business" position of President Coolidge, and the philosophy of prosperity of President Hoover were generally in public disfavor.

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[1]Thomas Jefferson, Crusade Against Ignorance, ed. G. C. Lee (New York: Columbia University Press, 1961), p. 26.

The apparent security of the decade of the 1920s, the "Era of Good Feeling," a time in which Americans turned greedily to making money and the enjoyment of its acquistions, was shaken abruptly with the Wall Street Crash in October, 1929. A symbol of affluence in this era was the car. By 1920 there were nine million automobiles on the road which broke down isolation among communities, sped the pace of life, people began to discover new ways to spend leisure, massive road building began and new freedom was given to youth. In 1930 the total production of automobiles multiplied three-fold. Movies became a bigger business with the introduction of "talkies" late in the 1920s. By the mid-1930s, eighty million to one hundred million people were attending movies, including children in ever increasing numbers. The movies in this period exercised a powerful influence as a transmitter of manners and inculcator of morals and their depiction of American life became one of the most powerful instruments for American imperialism. This media began to encourage powerful social comments, for example, Charlie Chaplin's Modern Times (1936) depicts the evils of the capitalistic industrial state, and The Great Dictator (1940) forewarned the tyranny of fascism.[2] Mass unemployment in the 1930s pushed many

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[2]Hofstadter, The Age of Reform, pp. 311-317; also ref. G. McDonald, M.Conway and M. Ricci, eds. The Films of Charlie Chaplin (New York: Bonanza Books, 1973), pp. 197-204.

urban industrial workers into politics. Labor began its great support of the Democratic party and the New Deal.

The impact of President Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal, beginning in 1932, permitted more government involvement in the affairs of people. Federal control of the growing bureaucracy was intensified. The program of the New Deal had its beginnings in the past, for example, conservation was a part of President Theodore Roosevelt's Square Deal program, railroad and trust reform had its roots in the Federal regulatory legislation of the 1880s, farm relief was supported by the Populists in the election of 1912, and judicial reform was advocated by President Lincoln and President Wilson. Systematically, the people began to look more to the government for assistance in social reconstruction.

With the international rise of fascism and communism in the 1920s and 1930s many sociologists and economists feared that America was heading for a revolution similar to the communist revolution in Russia in 1917. Thus, in this milieu progressive educators became increasingly oriented to using schools as a force for social change and stabilizing traditional values. To some this style of progressivism was profoundly conservative for it arose from a search for order in the social system.[3] John Dewey

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[3]Michael B. Katz, Class, Bureaucracy, and Schools (New York: Praiger Publishers, 1971), p. 118.

in 1916, anticipating the involvement of educators in an industrial state, said:

> The natural counterpart to a free and universal public education is a system of universal industry in which there are no idlers, no shirkers, or parasites and where the ruling motive is interest in good workmanship for public ends, not exploitation of others for private ends. This is the reason why industrial democracy and industrial education fit each other like hand and glove.[4]

Perforce, this progressive view of the bureaucracy had a tendency to legitimatize and perpetuate the sorting out of children into existing social patterns.[5]

Human capital is the possession of knowledge, skills and abilities by individuals at a given time in a given society. Education is not only a personal involvement, but a societal investment as well. John Galbraith, a noted Harvard economist, observed in 1958, "Investment in human beings is, prima facie, as important as in material capital....."[6]

As early as 1930, in the invitational Inglis lectures at Harvard University, Thomas Briggs began to champion the need for more public involvement in their

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[4]John Dewey, "Need of an Industrial Education in an Industrial Democracy," Social History of American Education, ed. R. Vassar (Chicago: Rand McNally and Co., 1965), p. 190.

[5]Katz, Class, Bureaucracy, and Schools, p. 122.

[6]John Kenneth Galbraith, The Affluent Society (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1958), pp. 271-272.

educational process. He saw the necessity for governmental and individual concerns meshing for a common purpose. An exploration into this concern as exemplified by his Great Investment Theory is the focus of this chapter.

It was Thomas Briggs' belief that the formulation of a basic principle which would serve as a guide in the development of educational programs was a solid contribution of his to secondary education. In a day of increased costs of all services, the public is distressed by the growing proportion of personal income that is being absorbed by taxes. Schools are asked to justify increased budgets by showing greater educational effectiveness; they must be held accountable for greater results if greater funds are to be raised. It is evident that a dollar of tax funds must bring a dollar in value. Does society get its dollar worth? This was the pertinent question asked by Thomas Briggs when he considered education as an investment.

In 1930 Dr. Briggs was invited to Harvard University to deliver a series of lectures[7] to commemorate the late Alexander Inglis (1879-1924). Dr. Inglis was a man who had devoted his professional career to the study of problems in

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[7]Some other notable educators that participated in the Inglis lecture series were: Leonard V. Koos in 1925, Charles H. Judd in 1928, George S. Counts in 1929, John Dewey in 1931, Henry C. Morrison in 1933, Isaac L. Kandel in 1934, and Edward L. Thorndike in 1937.

secondary education. The purpose of the Harvard lectureship was to perpetuate the spirit of Inglis' labors, and to contribute to the solution of problems in the field of his interest. For this occasion, and in a similar spirit, Briggs presented the treatise that he called The Great Investment.

The purpose of the lectures was to make clear the soundness of Briggs' Great Investment Theory, establish its importance and show the necessity of applying it both as a criterion of current practices and as a directive force for a new and sounder educational program. Briggs proposed for preliminary examination a common educational practice, that of free, compulsory, public education. Briggs noted that practices in education are taken for granted as they are in no other phase of life, with the possible exception of social customs. In the United States free public education is a national ideal; the principle is unquestioned. Heavy tax burdens are imposed upon citizens so that everyone may have an opportunity to obtain as much education as possible.[8] Moreover, children are required by law to attend schools for increasing lengths of time, and adults who interfere are punished by fines and/or imprison-

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[8]Julius Menacker, "The Challenge of Accountability," Menacker and Pollack, eds., Emerging Educational Issues: Conflicts and Contrasts (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1974), p. 359.

ment.[9] "Free public schools are the boast of the orator, the satisfaction of the public, and the hope of the new world."[10]

In modern civilization, free public education is a relatively recent happening. Education in Western Europe tended to be predominantly a private enterprise far into the eighteenth century. In our country it was only yesterday on the calendar of history that it was being argued whether or not the State should furnish free education for those who desired it. Cultural dislocations,[11] as Oscar Handlin and Bernard Bailyn have termed it, led to Massachusetts' 1664 compulsory education law, which required formal schooling of all the Colony's children.

Five years later Massachusetts adopted a law that required each town to provide schools and schoolmasters to fulfill the intent of the earlier legislation. An official state-designated, later state-run, structure was made responsible for seeing to it that there would be schools for the children. And so a very young America produced the first compulsory education law of modern

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[9]Thomas Henry Briggs, The Great Investment: Secondary Education in a Democracy (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1930), p. 2.

[10]Ibid.

[11]Oscar Handlin, The Uprooted (New York: Grosset and Dunlap, 1951); Bernard Bailyn, Education in the Forming of American Society (New York: Vintage, 1960).

times.[12]

At the turn of the twentieth century Ellwood Cubberley, a prominent educator and former Dean of the School of Education, Stanford University, wrote,". . . the first half century of our Republic, from an educational point of view, was largely given over to the principle that 'the whole state is interested in the education of the children of the state."[13] Cubberley also posited the existence of a national consensus about the goals of public education. Once the "dangerous and undemocratic" charity schools were superseded, Cubberley held, and the principle firmly established that a free common school education paid for by a general tax was "the common birth right of every American child," then the public school became established permanently in American public policy.[14]

It would be a mistake to assume that public elementary and secondary education developed concurrently. It remained for the educators of the second half of the nineteenth century to extend the concept up through the secondary level - the public elementary school having

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[12]Ibid.

[13]Ellwood P. Cubberley, Changing Conceptions of Education (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1909), p. 68.

[14]Idem, Public Education in the United States (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1919), pp. viii, 18-19.

been consolidated after the Civil War period.[15] Laymen and professional educators began to think in terms of a publicly supported educational system that would span the elementary and secondary years, but the movement met heavy resistance, as had the elementary common school fifty years earlier.[16] The earlier conflict, involving the elementary common school, was to get education laws on the books, while the secondary issue centered on whether or not these laws furnished the legal basis for upward extension.[17]

After early objections to the free public secondary school, the public slowly began to accept the principle of free schools.[18] The emerging secondary schools

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[15]William Van Til, ed., Education: A Beginning (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin Company, 1971), p. 146.

[16]Ibid.

[17]R. Freeman Butts and Lawrence A. Cremin, eds., A History of Education in American Culture (New York: Henry Holt, 1953), p. 418.

[18]The Kalamazoo Case: In 1874 the Michigan State Supreme Court upheld the Kalamazoo school district's right to collect taxes for the support of a high school. The decision, written by Justice Thomas M. Cooley, pointed out that Michigan had already provided for a tax supported elementary system and a state university and that it was inconsistent to exclude secondary education. This decision clarified the legal status of public secondary schools in Michigan and set the stage for the national expansion of public high schools. Peter F. Oliva, ed., The Secondary School Today (Scranton: Intext Educational Publisher, 1972), p. 18.

supported a traditional curriculum that was never fully adapted to American conditions and needs. "The public gradually increased their support of these schools, approved their proliferation, and developed a pride in them that has never been entirely based on a definite understanding of the purpose, the program or a true audit of the school's achievements."[19]

The idea of free public secondary schools fell in with the theory of democracy and the schools were established, supported and improved. Laws were passed enforcing attendance, to protect children against exploitation and to insure them what finally came to be conceived as a "right."[20] Thirty-one states enacted some form of compulsory education law by 1900; by 1918, all the then forty-eight states had compulsory education laws.[21] Presently, in most states, education regulations compel students to attend school through age sixteen.[22]

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[19]Thomas Henry Briggs, "The Administrator's Role in Secondary Education," Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary School Principals, Vol. 34, No. 170, April, 1950, p. 5.

[20]Idem, The Great Investment, p. 33.

[21]Henry J. Perkinson, Imperfect Panacea: American Faith in Education 1865-1965 (New York: Random House, Inc., 1968), Chap. 3, p. 52.

[22]Howard M. Johnson, "Are Compulsory Attendance Laws Outdated?," Phi Delta Kappan, Vol. LV, No. 4, Dec., 1973, p. 227.

It is interesting to note that the evolved precedent of compulsory free education appears to be a "taken for granted" institution by many. Dr. Briggs found, for example, that when the question of "why free education?" was asked of taxpaying, loyal school-supporting citizens, few had ever given the matter much thought.[23] The following were typical answers that Briggs received to his question: "We have always provided free schools," (betrays ignorance of even recent history); "To make men free," (how? and for what?); "We have an obligation to pass on the inheritance of the ages," (a statement that indicated no conception of how vast the intellectual inheritance is, or of the necessity of a principle for selecting what fraction should be passed on); "Every child in a democracy has a right to an even start in life," (it is wondered if citizens think secondary education ever has given all children an even start).[24]

"That such answers are insufficient is obvious," wrote Briggs, "the sound basis of support in a democracy for any practice is an intelligent understanding. . .traditional phrases and unanalyzed terms are shaky foundations when undermined by doubt and by the potent agencies of

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[23]Briggs, Are You Educated About Education?, p. 3.

[24]Ibid.

opposition."[25]

Dr. Briggs strongly felt that consideration must be given the pupils who "pay more than the State[26] to the great experiment of extended general education."[27] Pupils give years of their lives to school instruction which is not always of value to them, and parents often make great sacrifices that their children might attend high school and college. Disappointment and disillusionment for free compulsory universal education often follows when parents do not see in their children obvious progress, especially when parents cannot understand how the program of studies offered is expected to contribute to success in a future job or career.[28]

Briggs believed that this disillusionment may lead citizens to become active opponents of public education, or possibly they would become receptive to negative criticism of schools and would follow those who may lead the

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[25]Idem, The Great Investment, p. 5.

[26]Note: Throughout this chapter the term State, when capitalized, is used to indicate not political units of government, like Massachusetts or Maine, but, rather, the societal organization that has assumed responsibility for education. It may be a local school district, a municipality, a county, a political state, the entire population of the country, or any combination of these. This arbitrary definition must be kept continuously in mind when considering the arguments for the thesis presented.

[27]Idem, The Great Investment.

[28]Idem, Are You Educated About Education?, p. 5.

opposition. Resentment towards the mounting cost of public education might serve as an outlet for citizen's feelings, especially if they had no more children to send to school. "As the number of such disillusioned parents increases, the need of a clear understanding of the principle on which free public education is based is emphasized,"[29] wrote Briggs.

The public is clearly subjecting schools and school instruction to increasing scrutiny. It is a distressing fact that educators have not produced very impressive results for the nation's children. W. James Popham, prominent educational research expert and currently Director of the Instructional Objectives Exchange at the University of California at Los Angeles, commented on this point: "There are too many future voters who cannot read satisfactorily, cannot reason respectably, do not care for learning in general, and are pretty well alienated from the larger adult society."[30]

President Eisenhower, who also served briefly as President of Columbia University, where Thomas Briggs taught for more than a quarter-century, wrote: "Educators, parents and students must be continuously stirred up by the defects in our educational system. . .they must be

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[29]Idem, The Great Investment, p. 7.

[30]W. James Popham, "The New World of Accountability: In the Classroom," The Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary School Principals, May 1972, p. 29.

induced to abandon the educational path that, rather blindly, they have been following."[31] In accordance with this idea, Dr. Briggs felt that intelligent understanding of problems in the educational field was needed by parents, students and educators as a basis for guiding new plans and efforts. The obligation of school officials to justify expenditures and to build a firm foundation for informed public intelligence was great.[32]

Dr. Briggs maintained that the justification for compulsory public education was elementary:

The Great Investment Theory

> THE STATE SUPPORTS FREE SCHOOLS TO PERPETUATE ITSELF AND TO PROMOTE ITS OWN INTERESTS. EDUCATION IS, THEN, A LONG-TERM INVESTMENT THAT THE STATE MAY BE A BETTER PLACE IN WHICH TO LIVE, AND A BETTER PLACE IN WHICH TO MAKE A LIVING.[33]

Writing in The Educational Forum in 1953, Briggs supported his thesis. . ."all thinking about education should begin with the understanding that public schools

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[31]Sidney Hook, "John Dewey: His Philosophy of Education and Its Critics," R. Archambault, ed., Dewey On Education - Appraisals (New York: Random House, Inc., 1966), p. 127.

[32]Briggs, The Great Investment, p. 7.

[33]Idem, Improving Instruction, p. 414.

are supported not as a benevolence to children, but, rather, as a long-term investment for public good. When based on sentiment, which certainly not all taxpayers have, education is on a weak foundation. Children grow up and parents lose much of their interest in schools; many large taxpayers send their own children to private schools; millions of parents are required to help support public schools while contributing money and children to denominational institutions; and 'soulless' corporations cannot be expected to have a sentimental enthusiasm for what does not profit them."[34] The State never asks if the taxpayer "loves little children," it never asks if he is willing to contribute (school taxes); and strangely, the taxpayer seldom protests the principle.[35]

The justification, Briggs contended, was not only sound, but important. In 1966, he wrote, "the only reliable way of insuring the continuance of generous public support, and of increasing it to an extent commensurate with estimated needs is to place it on a sound basis of reason. Free education is a business investment and not a

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[34]Thomas Henry Briggs, "Do We Get Our Money's Worth?" The Educational Forum, Vol. 18, No. 1, November 1953, pp. 5-6.

[35]Idem, "Ideal Secondary School Curriculum Approach," Educational Digest, Vol. 17, September 1951, pp. 3-8.

benevolence. Philanthropy, charitableness, and good will are welcomed as enriching educational support and opportunities, but reason is essential to insure justice and wise development. If education is seen as a necessity for preserving and for bettering the State, opposition to adequate appropriations takes on the color of treason."[36]

Dr. Briggs recognized that other forms of government maintain themselves and sometimes prosper temporarily with education limited to a selected few. In a democracy, however, where one vote counts for as much as another, where success depends upon all citizens being compentently intelligent, informed and trained to act wisely on their information, public education is essential.[37] It is the seasoned judgment of Henry Steele Commager, historian and social critic, that our schools have kept us free.[38] This accomplishment is proof of the soundness of the view that an intimate relationship exists between democracy and education. "In other forms of government," wrote Briggs in 1930, "a leader is strong in proportion to the ignorance and the faith of his followers; democratic leadership is

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[36]Idem, Are You Educated About Education?, p. 8.

[37]Idem, The Great Investment.

[38]Commager, The American Mind, pp. 53-56.

strong in proportion to the educated intelligence of the people."[39] Those people who malign democracy and rush to point out its failures have not yet been able to propose anything approaching a satisfactory substitute.[40] John Dewey wrote, "The very ignorance, bias, frivolity, jealousy, instability, which are alleged to incapacitate them (the masses) from share in political affairs, unfit them still more for passive submission to rule by intellectuals."[41]

Briggs maintained that democracy, whether good or bad, is our accepted principle of government, and it can be made better only by an intelligently and purposefully directed education. . ."the cure for democracy is truly more democracy - of a real kind."[42] It follows, wrote Briggs, that "liberty is possible and can exist only through an education appropriate to each so that all have a chance to develop toward that element of equality without which the apotheosis of liberty cannot exist."[43]

As to the question of what kinds of education shall be provided and how far shall such education extend, Briggs

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[39]Briggs, The Great Investment, p. 10.

[40]Ibid.

[41]John Dewey, The Public and Its Problems (Denver: A. Swallow, 1954), p. 205.

[42]Briggs, The Great Investment, p. 12.

[43]Ibid.

asserted:

> Fundamentally it (the education received) must provide for such training as will perpetuate the State and promote its interests; and in wisdom it should continue until the law of diminishing returns begins to operate for each individual... democracy is not a utopia of escape, but a concatenation of opportunities for service. . .it can succeed only as this fact is perceived and as education is provided that set up the proper attitude in young citizens, and prepares them for such services to the State, indirect as well as direct, as each is competent to perform.[44]

With regard to the question of how far should such education extend, in the broad sense, American education must acknowledge that learning is lifelong - it does not stop when one leaves school. The most important learning, the most important true education, is the continuing education of educated, achieving adults.[45]

Because individuals affect others, directly and indirectly, positively or negatively, Briggs felt that the State should be concerned that each boy and girl be elevated to the highest positive plane that he or she is capable of reaching.[46] This view was similarly expressed by educator Robert Hutchins. . ."it is the basic right of the individual that his or her mind should be

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[44]Idem, Are You Educated About Education?, p. 10.

[45]Peter Drucker, "School Around the Bend," Arthur Daigon and Richard Dempsey, eds., School - Pass At Your Own Risk (Englewood, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1974), p. 273.

[46]Briggs, Are You Educated About Education?.

developed as far as it proves itself capable of expansion."[47]

The principle means of such elevation is education; therefore, society (the State) organizes and supports schools and even forces attendance in order that it may protect itself and promote its own interests.[48] Briggs marked this concept of greater importance than it at first appears, for it leads to the conclusion that the State must, to protect its investment and to insure dividends on it, be concerned that the curriculum be formulated and administered primarily with this end in view.[49] Dr. Briggs repeatedly stresses the importance of the curriculum.[50]

During an interview, Dr. Briggs commented that Governor Aycock, former governor of North Carolina, once said, "North Carolina is too poor not to educate its children."[51] Briggs said ". . .he (Aycock) had something of the idea that education was an investment and not an embellishment of personalities. . .certainly not decora-

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[47]Robert Hutchins, Some Observations On American Education (Cambridge: University Press, 1956), p. ix.

[48]Briggs, Are You Educated About Education?, p. 10.

[49]Ibid.

[50]Idem, "Administrator's Role in Secondary Education," p. 7.

[51]Taped interview with Dr. Warren C. Seyfert.

tive, although many people think of that today."[52] Horace Mann, famous nineteenth century educational reformer, capsuled this same idea when he said, "Education prevents being poor."[53] Mann like Briggs, argued that education is our society's most important investment in its future.

Briggs held that there are four means that the State can use to insure its perpetuation: war, the police force, social pressure and education.[54] The first two, war and the police force, are generally recognized and supported. Briggs questioned the wisdom in the costly exercise of war without taking measures for an education which is directed to prevent its recurrence. Briggs felt that it was not wise to give away a large part of the material wealth and capitol of a nation, in addition to the lives of its citizens, to preserve the State from outside enemies when the greater danger from internal harm is overlooked.[55]

With regard to the police force: "It is almost always negative in its effects - it restrains but seldom promotes."[56] And social pressure Briggs observed as the

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[52]Ibid.

[53]Christopher Jencks, Inequality: A Reassessment of the Effect of Family and Schooling in America (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1972), p. 186.

[54]Briggs, The Great Investment, p. 17.

[55]Ibid.

[56]Ibid., pp. 21-22.

result of education of some sort: in the home, in the church, through the press, from incidental contacts at work, in clubs and societies, or in the formal schools.[57] The only agency that the State controls and therefore can use with certainty for perpetuating its ideals, and for directing its citizens to better living is the school. A. S. Neill, English reform educator and founder of Summerhill, a school built on the principle of education without force,[58] suggested that school subjects was one of the means used by the State to prevent the child from being educated.[59] This was especially true, he felt, of the secondary school, where boys learn the Theory of Quadratics before they go out to deliver newspapers or beef. The only subject Neill considered dangerous was History. . . "and the textbooks (History) are so written that they are almost dangerproof."[60]

"The greater the effects," wrote Briggs in 1930, "the more concern the State has with what the schools teach. . .genuine education is dangerous, for it leads to positive action affecting the social body. Conversely,

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[57]Ibid.

[58]A. S. Neill, Summerhill, with a Foreword by Erich Fromm (New York: Hart Publishing Co., 1964), p. x.

[59]Idem, The Problem Teacher (London: Jenkins Publishing Co., 1944), p. 42.

[60]Ibid., p. 46.

it may be maintained that when education is not dangerous, when it merely presents, however skillfully, innocuous facts, however highly organized, it is not important."[61]

Expanding this point, Briggs explained that if an inventory of what people do and of how they feel were taken, it would include items that would likely cause criticism and even serious objection if they were to be considered in the classroom. There would be no risk in teaching means of expressing the agent in Latin, the verbs in French, the customs of the Eskimos of Greenland, or the names of geologic eras, but when the school ventured to discuss problems of money - which includes labor - or religion, or social relations with the inevitable consideration of sex, it would be on dangerous ground. The essential consideration would be which group of topics is more important to influence young people toward a better participation in modern life.[62] In this respect, Dr. Briggs felt that "all education that was important was dangerous, and that education that was not dangerous was not important."[63]

A believer in constructive criticism, Briggs

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[61]Briggs, The Great Investment, p. 22.

[62]Idem, "Monosyllables," p. 7.

[63]Ibid.

suggested that the State was negligent in the overseeing of the schools, which resulted in inefficencies within the system. He wrote:

> The fact that the schools do attempt, by formal and informal means, to influence the attitudes and the actions of their students immediately and later when they are full-fledged citizens, is no evidence that they do their job wisely, or that they accomplish anything like maximum results.[64]

The atmosphere of the school must create a continually growing freedom and self-reliance, accompanied by a constantly growing challenge against obstacles that are generally possible, but not necessarily easy.[65] Except sporadically and usually in superficial matters the State has not been concerned with what influence the schools have on making each community a better place in which to live and a better place in which to make a living.[66]

Among other objectives a curriculum devised to perpetuate and to improve the State would lead to a better understanding by the next generations of the ideals of democratic living, social as well as political. Such an understanding would encompass not only the ideals, but

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[64]Briggs, The Great Investment, p. 23.

[65]Fred T. Wilhelms, "Tomorrow's Assignment," p. 213.

[66]Briggs, The Great Investment.

also their justifications and the necessity for their approximation in living. Thus, there would result a far better knowledge than now exists, or has ever existed in the past, of the rules of the game necessary for happy and prosperous living, and more of a desire to follow them.[67]

Advancing his idea for future curriculum improvement, Briggs, in 1953, commented: "Although individuals and small groups of citizens can do something to influence local teachers to make improvements in the curriculum, what is really needed and what, I think, is ultimately inevitable, is a nation-wide program."[68] He suggested a program that would include the following:

1. make the public disturbingly aware of the shortcomings as well as proud of the many meritorious practices of our schools;

2. make the general public accept its responsibility to determine the objectives that its school should seek;

3. bring about a general agreement on the main objectives of education, on what the public wishes its schools to achieve;

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[67]Briggs, Are You Educated About Education?, Chap. 7, p. 12.

[68]Idem, "Do We Get Our Money's Worth?, p. 12.

4. reach agreement on a few basic principles - sound, simply stated, and both directive and compelling to action - that will indicate how the new curriculum should be developed;

5. stimulate the employed professional personnel to concerned activity for an improved curriculum; and

6. require reports, which should be audited as carefully and as objectively as those of any industry, of achievements in terms of agreed-on objectives.[69]

Viewing the curriculum situation, Briggs wrote, "the problem is nation-wide and should be attacked on a nation-wide basis."[70] The challenge indicated to Briggs the need of a permanent curriculum research laboratory, as well staffed as the great industries' research laboratories. He realized that his was an ambitious program, and one that would require a large amount of time and energy, and ultimately large expenditures of money. He questioned the alternative. . ."the waste to time, energy, and money in present practices is enormous, even when the great improvements in education over the years is recognized . . .it is futile to build better buildings and have more skilled teachers merely to turn out more of an unsatisfactory product, and this schools will continue to do unless a new curriculum is developed."[71]

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[69]Ibid. [70]Ibid. [71]Ibid.

Dr. Fred T. Wilhelms, former executive secretary of the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development in Washington, D. C., and former student of Briggs', echoed this sentiment by referring to teaching results as "a dreary wasteland of mediocrity."[72]

Briggs felt that, unfortunately, most criticism of schools is negative, which in turn delays the progress of curriculum reform. Writing in 1953, he stated:

> . . .it (a new curriculum) is not likely to be developed anytime soon unless the public changes its negative criticisms of relative petty details to constructive persistence on getting sound means used for development of what is needed. . .
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> To be content with negative criticism or even to continue complacency with an ineffective and wasteful tradition is to abnegate responsibility and not only to condone waste, but also to invite national disaster.[73]

As for now, there is sufficient and undeniable evidence that the majority of youth do not master what they learn, and that they fail to use in life what they do retain of the curriculum because they have never been made certain that the curriculum is of worth to them.[74]

With regard to the question of who should be accountable for determining the school program, Dr. Briggs

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[72]Fred T. Wilhelms, "Priorities in Change Efforts," Phi Delta Kappan, Vol. LI, No. 6, March, 1970, p. 369.

[73]Briggs, "Do We Get Our Money's Worth?," p. 2.

[74]Idem, The Great Investment, p. 24.

was apprehensive that from the illustrations used in his writings, some who do not read carefully may conclude that there is an implied argument for determining the school program by a popular vote.[75] "Nothing could be more absurd," he wrote.[76] In general the decision as to what shall be taught has been left to individual teachers or to small groups who have either (1) "not been aware of the larger obligations of public education," or (2) "have blandly ignored them."[77]

The curriculum is too important and too complex to be determined even in part, by laymen, especially by those who are so focused on single and often selfish phases that they cannot see the problem as a whole. Similarly, the curriculum is too important and too complex to be determined by professional schoolmen unless they base it on principles which are approved by the State, and which are consistently applied in the discovery and organization of details.[78]

Moving towards a possible solution, Briggs advanced the idea of the Curriculum Research Laboratory.[79] Briggs felt that society must appropriate as generously

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[75]Briggs, "Administrator's Role in Secondary Education," p. 7.

[76]Ibid. [77]Ibid.

[78]Idem, Are You Educated About Education?, p. 18.

[79]For a detailed discussion of this matter see Chapter III, p. 78.

for its processes, i.e., millions of dollars spent by the best minds, uninterruptedly devoting themselves to the continuous and never-ending task of bettering the curriculum.[80]

The new curriculum that Briggs envisioned would be based on a recognition of the need to pay dividends in social good on the great public investment. It would not neglect what was traditionally academic, but would be far more comprehensive than any curriculum of ours has ever been in the past. It would need to be, for life was far more complex and extensive, for individuals on every level of culture, than ever before.[81] Human freedom was expanding during the decades when Briggs advanced his idea for curriculum improvement. It was necessary for education and schooling to develop at an equal pace.[82]

The formulation of a new, ideal curriculum should, Briggs felt, include the following:

1. The goal of betterment of society through the betterment of the individual.

2. It will be concerned with attitudes, each one infused by an approving emotion; it will be concerned with

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[80]Briggs, Are You Educated About Education?, p. 26.

[81]Ibid., p. 99.

[82]Jack R. Frymier, "A Curriculum Manifesto," The Future of Education, p. 78.

information.

3. It will make curricular such of the present extra-curricular activities as can prove their value.

4. It will be guided by the obligation to pay positive dividends to the supporting State.

5. The new curriculum should be appropriate to all students.[83]

Dr. Briggs held that the curriculum was the basis for everything, every responsibility that educators have. . . In 1935, he wrote, "School is organized that it may be administered; it is administered that it may be instructed; and neither administration nor organization has any meaning whatever unless it contributes to the improvements of education."[84]

Briggs theorized that because education is an investment by the public, schoolmen must realize that they are servants of the public and must, therefore, carry out the wishes that the public may have. As an example, Briggs referred to the matter of the Scopes trial (Dayton, Tennessee, July, 1925), a dramatic test case following the passage of a Tennessee statute prohibiting the

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[83]Thomas Henry Briggs, Curriculum Problems (New York; The Macmillan Company, 1927), p. 34.

[84]Idem, "Looking Backward and Forward," School and Society, Vol. 42, October 26, 1935, p. 556.

teaching in public schools of theories of creation contrary to the literal account in Genesis. John T. Scopes went on trial for teaching the Darwinian theory in a biology class, and, though convicted, was released on a technicality. The law still remains on the Tennessee statute books, but the nationwide publicity of the case discouraged similar legislation elsewhere.[85] Briggs, aware that the position taken by the state of Tennessee is sometimes ridiculed, held that ". . .the state (of Tennessee) had a right to forbid the teaching of evolution. . .as education is an investment by the public, schoolmen must realize that they are the 'hired hands' of the public."[86]

Pursuing his argument that education will make a community a better place in which to live, Briggs suggested that there was little doubt that education has greatly affected standards of living, and little doubt that it will continue to do so. "An educated community insures a comfortable degree of integration on respectable and enduring levels. . .those who have profited by education know many things in common, think much in

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[85]Hofstadter, The Age of Reform, p. 286.

[86]Briggs, New York tape.

common, and have in common many feelings about right and beauty that enable them to live together in amity. . .they can appreciate and show tolerance to those who for one reason or another differ in their interests, attitudes, and conduct, especially to those whose independent thinking leads them onward to challenging departures from common practices."[87]

Dr. Briggs refined his meaning of "integration":

> As progress does not depend upon the similarity which we find, but upon the similarity which we achieve, education carries the responsibility for the largest part of the increase of desirable integration (the unifying of individuals into a satisfying and effective coherence). Desired integration, therefore, cannot be achieved just by book learning or by forcibly enrolling heterogeneous groups in the same school (however that may help). . .each youngster is already strongly integrated by family prejudices toward a church or political party, or to his gang. . .he can be truly integrated into society only when he is taught to accept its ideals and mores, and develops favorable attitudes towards them.[88]

The educated make a community a better place in which to live also, according to Briggs, by furnishing a stimulus to growth. Growth, according to Briggs, was the most satisfying of all man's activities because the truly educated never cease to grow. They are creative in meeting and handling the problems of life. Briggs

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[87]Briggs, Are You Educated About Education?, p. 23.

[88]Ibid.

felt that this talent in even a single individual makes a community a better place in which to live; when possessed by all, or even by many, it becomes a tremendously profitable social asset.[89]

Dr. Briggs was convinced that the educated are "in degrees rich in resources for avocational and vocational successes."[90] The educated, having such a variety of interests that boredom is never a problem, find no time to intervene negatively in the lives of others as is the temptation of those people less fortunate. Instead, the educated are ready to share their wealth of ideas and tastes with those who have a measure of appreciation. Briggs felt that the educated should serve as models to those who desire to increase their intellectual, aesthetic and moral resources in order that life may be more abundant.[91] "The educated are among the great antidotes to passivity."[92]

The cultural aspects of the educated making the community a better place in which to live was also stressed by Dr. Briggs. He stated:

> . . .their (the educated) own appetites, desires, and demands have brought together the means of satisfying numerous and various wants. . .among

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[89]Ibid. [90]Ibid., p. 24. [91]Ibid.

[92]Jerome S. Bruner, "After Dewey, What?," Saturday Review, June, 1961, p. 57.

> them are libraries, museums, exhibits of art in its many forms, from painting and sculpture through architecture and well-planned city parks for recreation, conveniences of every kind, and skilled service for all needs. The variety and richness of such assets, all of which have come because of educated needs, attract new citizens and make all comfortable to whatever extent used. . .the poorest inhabitant of such a community has an actual, as well as a potential, wealth greater than anyone can possess in a community which has not been built up by demands of those made competent by education. 93

John Dewey suggests, in My Pedagogic Creed (1897), that the school continues to be the principle instrument of social progress in an era of swift change.[94] Social progress was dependent upon, not only making the community a better place in which to live through (1) educational integration, (2) common interests, (3) respect for individuality, (4) growth stimulation, (5) vocational and avocational successes, and (6) increased cultural outlets, as argues by Briggs, but also upon making the community a better place in which to live through the reduction of crime and its causes.

Briggs found there to be an inverse ratio regarding the relationship of crime/poverty and education.[95]

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[93] Briggs, The Great Investment, pp. 86-87.

[94] John Dewey, My Pedagogic Creed (New York: E. L. Kellogg and Company, 1897), p. 24.

[95] Thomas Henry Briggs, "The Role of General Education," Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary School Principals, Vol. 32. March, 1948, p. 40.

"Communities rank as to crime and poverty inversely, on the whole, as they rank in education - partly because of education, partly because of its results, and partly because of other reasons,"[96] claimed Thomas Briggs. "There is strong reason for believing that the negative correlation would be larger still if the machinery of education were directed more consistently and more intelligently toward achieving economic comforts and respect for law, whether common or statute, objectives that are generally proclaimed and often neglected in practice."[97]

Briggs asserted that democracy itself has a direct dependence on education. In January, 1963, the late President John F. Kennedy reflected these sentiments when in his special message to Congress he said:

> Education is the key to freedom and progress. Nothing has contributed more to the enlargement of this Nation's strength and opportunities than our traditional system of free, universal elementary and secondary education, coupled with widespread availability of college education.
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> For the Nation, increasing the quality and availability of education is vital to both our national security and our domestic well-being. . .a free nation can rise no higher than the standards of excellence set in its schools and colleges.[98]

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[96]Ibid.

[97]Briggs, Are You Educated About Education?, p. 25.

[98]"Special Message to the Congress on Education," Document 43, January 29, 1963, Public Papers (1963), pp. 105-106.

Briggs specified that the type of education that was necessary to sustain a democracy was not one that was merely a "fact dispenser," but education that was seriously concerned with preserving the State, and with the bettering of it in everyway possible.[99]

A final contribution to be identified, although Briggs in his writings cites others, is that education tends to make any community a better place in which to live by raising the standards of living. Education gives direct instruction; it employs teachers who by various means have learned what higher standards are, and also the advantages of pursuing them.[100] A high standard is an example, an encouragement, and a stimulus to emulation; such images of excellence, for example, the Nobel laureate, the brilliant cellist, the historian making use of the past, or the sociologist seeking a pattern in the present, represent excellence at the frontiers of endeavor. It follows that if a sense of progress and change toward greater excellence is to illuminate our schools, there must be a constant flowing back of their wisdom to enliven and inform both teacher and student.[101] Dr. Briggs

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[99]Briggs, Are You Educated About Education?, p. 25.

[100]Idem, The Great Investment, p. 88.

[101]Bruner, "After Dewey, What?, " p. 60.

felt that there was little doubt that education has greatly affected standards of living, or that it (education) can be made to do more.[102]

The foregoing points, Briggs asserted, were stated reasons that made a community a better place in which to live through education; he argued too, that education makes a community better in which to earn a living. Briggs realized, as anyone who has studied the various attempts to prove the economic value of education, the problem is extremely complex. In 1964, he wrote, "Often cause and effect are confused and a common cause for both education and prosperity is ignored - but the evidence seems unmistakable - there is a close relationship between such education as is provided and economic prosperity. . .the ability to read, to figure, to apply acquired knowledge, and to learn new processes more economically has contributed to make men better able to make a living..."[103]

In this framework of education, curriculum again raised its head - Briggs wrote, "throughout the years there has remained a common core of academic subjects which have been little disturbed by the changes that have taken place around them."[104] The reference Briggs

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[102]Briggs, Are You Educated About Education?, p. 27.

[103]Ibid.

[104]Idem, Secondary Education (rev. ed.), p. 55.

was speaking to concerned the development of the high school curriculum from 1860 to 1930. Dwight Allen, Dean of the School of Education at the University of Massachusetts, noted that "traditionally, our educational system has been the slowest evolver in history."[105] With the Great Investment theory in mind that:

> The State supports free schools to perpetuate itself, and to promote its own interests - Education is, then, a long-term investment that the State may be a better place in which to live, and a better place in which to make a living.[106]

the latter portion of the theory shall be examined: "Education is a long-term investment that the State may be a better place in which to make a living."[107] Briggs argued, "A very small part of the curriculum has been formulated with the intent of directly contributing to economic effectiveness. . .that the contribution of education to earning power could be considerably greater if curricula were made more directly vocational is so obvious as to need no argument."[108] John Dewey's idea, in accordance with Briggs', suggested: ". . .the point is not to rid the school of subject matter, but rather to

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[105]Dwight Allen, "What the Future of Education Might Be," Theodore W. Hipple, ed., The Future of Education, p. 11.

[106]Briggs, Improving Instruction, p. 414.

[107]Ibid.

[108]Idem, Are You Educated About Education?, p. 27.

build new subject matter, as well organized as the old but having more intimate relation to the experience of students."[109]

In our devotion to cultural education, Briggs commented, we often lose sight of the fact that it contributes to only one phase of the perfect man. . ."no person can ideally be a good citizen unless he is equipped by nature and by training to make a living, and the more adequate that is, the better in many ways for his neighbors as well as for himself and his family. . .the ship of state cannot move steadily or comfortably forward with a cargo in inactive, incompetent, non-contributory passengers."[110] Briggs argued that for the good of the State, education should insure that every citizen be better prepared to make a better living for himself and for his dependents. It is only reasonable, he argued, to assume that by special instruction everyone can be trained to be more efficiently productive on a higher level - both for making a living and for making a life.[111] If such a proposed program were carried out, school funding would be helped. According to Dr. Briggs, such training

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[109]Lawrence A. Cremin, "John Dewey and the Progressive Education Movement, 1915-1952," Reginald Archambault, ed., Dewey On Education, p. 18.

[110]Briggs, The Great Investment, p. 54.

[111]Ibid.

during the twelve to fifteen year period, if carried out, could increase the annual earning power by ten percent, speculating conservatively. "The increment of income would pay the entire cost of the public school system."[112]

One pillar of support, therefore, for the argument that education makes a community better in which to earn a living, as asserted by Briggs, is that education increases productiveness, and thereby does contribute to making the State a better place in which to make a living. But it is not merely by increasing productiveness that education increases demands and thus furnishes work for others."[113] Shortsighted economists sometimes, in their eagerness for foreign markets, lose sight of the fact that the best market, and ultimately the only one that can continue to pay for what it buys without disturbing exchange, is here at home.[114]

There is a segment of our population that does know that the best markets are indeed here at home, however, they do disturb the exchange, for they continue

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[112]Briggs, Are You Educated About Education?, p. 28.

[113]Idem, "A Growing Demand for Unbiased Economic Materials," School Executive, Vol. 72, March, 1953, p. 57.

[114]Ibid.

not to pay for what they buy: the criminal segment of our population. Briggs, as already stated, ascertained that there was an inverse correlation between crime and education, therefore, education makes a community a better place in which to live by reducing crimes and their causes. Briggs also postulated that the crime/education correlation has contributed to making the State a better place in which to make a living.[115]

Dr. Briggs was not alone in his deduction; other studies indicate similar findings. As far back as 1846, during a Massachusetts Senate Committee meeting, it was readily conceded "that men are made what they are, in a great degree, by education. . .if a child is brought up with thieves and drunkards, it will be singular, indeed, if he becomes not a thief or a drunkard or both; he may be educated to evil as well as to good."[116]

In 1881, a Philadelphia committee that was to report to the National Education Association was appointed to probe the truth of the assertion that a large proportion of the convicts then confined in the prisons of

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[115]Briggs, Are You Educated About Education?, p. 29.

[116]Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Senate Document No. 86, (1846), pp. 13-14.

that city were high school graduates.[117] Enlarging their investigatory scope, the committee was authorized to inquire not only into the special question, then mooted, but to collect general statistics, showing the relationship of education and crime. They studied the reports of penitentiaries and prisons of some twenty states, and found that the relationship of education to crime was the same state-wide as it was city-wide (Philadelphia). They reached the following conclusions:

1. that about one-sixth of all the crime in the country is committed by persons totally illiterate.

2. that about one-third of it is committed by persons practically illiterate.

3. that the proportion of criminals among the illiterate is about ten times as great as among those who have been instructed in the elements of a common-school education or beyond.[118]

The J. P. Wickersham report went on to state: "Ignorance, of course, is not the only cause of crime; no one claims education to be an antidote for all criminal propensities - but, with all its defects, we are well convinced that the system of public schools is the most

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[117]J. P. Wickersham, "Education and Crime," The Journals and Proceedings and Addresses of the National Education Association of the U. S., Session of the Year 1881, Second-day Proceedings, pp. 53-55.

[118]Ibid.

potential agency, by all odds, at work among us today, to root up vice, to lessen crime, and to lift up the people to a higher plane of civilization."[119] Briggs then, asserting that education reduces crime and thereby furnishes the State larger dividends, postulated that education, in addition to making the State a better place in which to live, also has very materially contributed to making the State a better place in which to make a living.

In the context of Briggs' Great Investment theory, it is interesting to note the parallel lines that come into focus concerning the theory and the philosophy of Josiah Royce, philosopher and the last of the great nineteenth century idealists,[120] whose writings were read extensively by young Thomas Briggs. Royce's main contribution to Briggs was that the word "good" has no meaning until qualified by a prepositional phrase "good for what."[121] Briggs, like Royce, was of the pragmatic philosophic school holding that nothing has any meaning, certainly no importance, unless it results in a bene-

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[119]Karier, Man, Society, and Education, p. 98.

[120]Ibid.

[121]Briggs, "The Administrator's Role in Secondary Education," p. 8.

ficial action.[122] In The Philosophy of Loyalty (1908),[123] Royce wrote, "because, in the long run, the State is a 'personality' greater than any individual, and is, in fact, a whole more important than its parts, the student must learn to respect his countrymen and the community into which he is born. . .he should study the cultural foundations of the nation, as well as the locality in which he lives in order to develop a strong sense of loyalty and devotion to the political ideals which his nation and community foster."[124] Royce goes one step further and insists that our allegiances should not only be national, but international.[125]

There was a question concerning the implications of education as an investment. Briggs observed that when his thesis (education should be considered as a long-term investment by the State that it may perpetuate itself and promote its own interests)[126] was proposed, there was a tendency toward accepting it as a harmless platitude.[127] Briggs did not agree with this conclusion,

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[122]Taped interview with Dr. Seyfert.

[123]Josiah Royce, The Philosophy of Loyalty (New York: Macmillan and Co., 1908), p. 33.

[124]Ibid. [125]Ibid.

[126]Briggs, Improving Instruction, p. 414.

[127]Idem, Are You Educated About Education?, p. 1.

stating: "Once accepted, it has implications that modify one's whole philosophy of education, it ramifies into attitudes and actions that are far from ineffective for anyone who takes the trouble to realize what acceptance of the principle necessitates."[128] As a matter of course it follows that investments should pay dividends. The dividends desired from the investment of education are citizens made better able and better disposed to contribute to the betterment of the State; it also follows that the whole educational program should be planned to that end.[129] The only instrument that the State has for effecting this goal is the schools, and the "schools reflect the society they serve."[130]

Briggs noted that one objection that is certain to be expressed when the thesis is presented that education is an investment by the State for the promotion of its own interests, is that concerning individual rights. The objection is based on a fear that the individual may be "prostituted by corporate society."[131] In 1947, Briggs

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[128]Ibid.

[129]Briggs, The Great Investment, p. 49.

[130]Henry Steele Commager, "Forces Affecting the Schools," Chandler, Powell, Hazard, eds., Education and the New Teacher (New York: Dodd, Mead and Co., 1971), p. 51.

[131]Briggs, Are You Educated About Education?, p. 3.

wrote, "There are those who would maintain that the interests of the individual child are paramount. . .but they are wrong. . .fortunately in every case the education that is good for the community is also good for the individual; and also, in the great majority of cases, what is good for the individual is ultimately good for the community."[132] To illustrate: If an individual pupil requested a course on the country of Chile, a request that was not beneficial for the group, it would be clear that the individual pupil had no claim on public funds to provide such a course. Earlier in the same publication Dr. Briggs stated:

> . . . a logical corollary is that the schools have no right to spend public money to teach anything that does not make a justifiable contribution to this end (making the community a better place in which to live and a better place in which to make a living). . . we cannot escape the conslusion that education must accept the responsibility for spending the money provided by the greatest public investment to teach those things that, in the long run, promise most to promote the interests of the supporting community.[133]

Briggs also considered the rights and welfare of the group. He felt that only in a myopic way can any individual be said to have rights that are in opposition to the interests of the group. In no instance can the right of the individual transcend those collective rights of the

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[132]Briggs, "Monosyllables," p. 18.

[133]Ibid.

group; otherwise, the rights or interests of the many yield to those of the one.[134] In The Public and Its Problems, John Dewey wrote: "Both words, individual and social are hopelessly ambiguous, and the ambiguity will never cease so long as we think in terms of an antithesis. The human being whom we fasten upon as individual par excellence is moved and regulated by his associations with others; what he does and what the consequences of his behavior are, what his experience consists of, cannot even be described, much less accounted for, in isolation."[135]

Taking into consideration the variations in prosperity, the proportion of children to adults, the lack of population in some areas, and attitudes towards universal education, Briggs felt it was proper that taxes be increased and that the federal government take a bigger role in the support of schools. The proposed money source was: "wherever the wealth may be, and expended equitably where it is needed. . .logic and need point to a far larger participation of the national government in the support of schools."[136]

Historically, the most persistent and organized opposition to federal aid to education came from con-

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[134]Briggs, Are You Educated About Education, p. 7.

[135]Dewey, The Public and Its Problems, p. 186.

[136]Briggs, The Great Investment, pp. 61-62.

servative groups such as the National Association of Manufacturers and the United States Chamber of Commerce, both of which have highly organized and well-funded lobbying activities; others were groups such as the Daughters of the American Revolution and the American Legion.[137] Their argument was based on a fear that federal aid to education would bring federal control and thereby discourage local initiative.

Opposition to increased federal spending came from other directions also in the era of the 1930s. The Federal Constitution made no specific provision for school support; however, neither did it forbid it:

> A careful reading of the reports on the Constitutional Convention reveals that Pinckney and. . .others proposed an article on education, but it was held unnecessary, the power of appropriation already lying with Congress. There is no legal reason why the Federal Government should not meet the new conditions and needs by vastly enlarging its concern with education and increasing the aid that it already gives.[138]

The term "paternalism" was bantered by opponents. Briggs called it a slogan of excuse:

> If it is paternalism for the Federal Government to collect taxes from the prosperous and expend them equitably for the good of all, wherever they may be, it is similarly paternalism for the state,

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[137]Daniel Selskovich, The Schools and American Society (Lexington, Mass.: Xerox College Publishing, 1973), p. 14.

[138]Briggs, The Great Investment, p. 62.

> the county, or the local school district to do so.. the beneficent and approved act of the smaller unit would be made merely a more beneficent justice by the larger. [139]

Those in favor of increased federal support for schools argued, as did Briggs, that the nation's future rests on the effectiveness of its schools. Accordingly the national government should not disclaim responsibility if the school system is threatened with inadequate funds. Proponents contended that basic improvements in the quality of education for American children are needed, and enrollment increases and increased costs will bring lower standards unless school taxes are sharply increased.[140] The government's failures, more omission than commission Briggs believed, were due largely to the fact that it has never conceived education as a long-term investment to return dividends in the form of citizens made better able and better disposed to contribute to the betterment of society.[141]

Anthony Burgess, English author, professor, and lecturer, has stated, "England has never taken education seriously;"[142] however, that is not the case in America.

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[139] Ibid.

[140] Selakovich, Schools and American Society, p. 215.

[141] Ibid.

[142] Anthony Burgess, guest of host Wm. F. Buckley, Jr., transcript of Firing Line, taped in New York City on December 21, 1972, p. 2.

Currently, in the United States, defense, social programs in health, housing and roadbuilding take national priority over education. The federal influence on education is disproportionate to its financial support which, in 1971, amounted to approximately seven to nine billion dollars.[143] Public education in America is generally regarded as a function of state government. Local tax dollars constitute the greatest source of school funds in most states. State and federal funds are a poor second and third, in that order.[144] Briggs concurred that the question should be, not whether federal aid, but how much. . ."Balance among local, state, and federal influence on education likely will not be achieved in a dynamic society. About the only safe prediction for the federal role in education is that it will persist, change its form to meet political shifts and, to some extent, reflect the national priorities."[145]

In accordance with his investment theory, Dr. Briggs urged the abolition of private schools. Writing in 1930, he stated, "In practice they (private schools) cannot and do not contribute as the public school can be made to do to the perpetuation and promotion of the democratic

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[143]Chandler, Powell, Hazard, eds., Education and the New Teacher, p. 31.

[144]Ibid. [145]Ibid., p. 32.

state. . .when society conceives education with the importance that its possibilities justify, and when it has prepared a program consistent with its need, the private school will no longer be required or tolerated."[146]

Private schools that met the legal requirements of a state, where such requirements existed, were legal alternatives to public schools by a law passed by the Oregon legislature in 1922; this principle was confirmed by the United States Supreme Court in the 1925 Oregon Decision.[147] Briggs felt that the State "permits" private schools to be conducted, approves them as satisfying all requirements of education, and usually gives them no supervision at all or, at best, one that is merely perfunctory.[148] This policy, accorded Briggs, may not be sensible or long-sighted. While the majority of private schools follow the general academic program of public schools, in many cases they are not required to do so. Briggs noted, "Private schools can teach whatever philosophies of life they please, and this remarkable privilege is subsidized (for those schools not conducted

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[146]Briggs, The Great Investment, p. 94.

[147]William Van Til, ed., Education: A Beginning, p. 175.

[148]Briggs, The Great Investment, p. 86.

for profit) by the remission of taxes."[149]

Briggs' chief objection to private schools was that they were too independent; too independent of control or regulation by the State. Briggs felt that no institution that carries the responsibility of influencing the youth that will become tomorrow's citizens can society permit to be totally independent.

> It (the private school) is relatively independent of state control; as a general rule it has considerable freedom to set its own standards and curriculum, admit and dismiss students, and hire and dismiss teachers, without State supervision or control. It is free, legally, to incorporate religious teaching in its curriculum, and free, practically, to encourage discussion of controversial topics.[150]

To ease this situation, Briggs suggested that the State approve the programs of the private schools, inspect their work, and measure their results, not only in academic achievements, but also the whole complex of attitudes and ideals that affect the students as members of society.[151]

Briggs felt that private schools were a handicap rather than an asset to the program of perpetuating and promoting the interests of a common society. He wrote,

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[149]Ibid., p. 88.

[150]Francis Parkman, "Independent Schools," American Educational Research Association, Encyclopedia of Educational Research, 4th ed., 1969, p. 633.

[151]Briggs, The Great Investment, p. 94.

"it is exceedingly doubtful if unprejudiced findings would substantiate the independent school on the basis either of theory or of accomplishment. . .in theory they have, as a class, small justification. . .in practice they cannot and do not contribute to the perpetuation and promotion of the democratic state."[152]

Within his theory of education as an investment, Dr. Briggs spoke to the issue of vocational education. He envisioned education for all levels of intelligence with "no dump heap of rejected failures."[153] This quest is relevant today: "Tomorrow's schools will have no rejects; it must guarantee every child a high minimum of accomplishment in fundamental skills."[154] Included in these educational plateaus was that of vocational training, which Briggs whole-heartedly supported believing it to be a necessary cog in the investment theory. In 1930, he stated, "Secondary education has been handicapped by the tradition that it is most respectable only when it is preparing for institutions of higher learning. . .merely because collegiate education of the usual kind is 'higher,' it is not therefore

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[152]Ibid.

[153]Briggs, Are You Educated About Education?, p. 6.

[154]Drucker, "School Around the Bend," p. 271.

suitable for all youth."[155]

Vocational education was given needed support in this country near the turn of the century. Previously Germany, France and Denmark led the way in building schools for the teaching of the practical arts; the United States was slow in responding to the need largely because of the influx of technically educated workers from Europe.[156] The National Commission on Vocational Education, set up by Congress in 1913, made a comprehensive study that ultimately resulted in the passage of the Smith-Hughes Bill in 1917. This act provided for a Federal Board of Vocational Education to cooperate with the states in furthering high school instruction of industrial trades, agriculture, home economics, and commerce.[157]

Briggs was aware of a "strange reluctance of the State to commit itself to vocational education."[158] This was due, he felt, to: (1) the strength of the traditional academic curriculum, (2) the lack of agreement and of consistency among the educational specialists in the field, (3) the complexity, the difficulty, and the cost of any

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[155]Briggs, The Great Investment, p. 103.

[156]Krug, The Shaping of the American High School, pp. 240-244.

[157]Ibid.

[158]Briggs, Are You Educated About Education?, p. 9.

comprehensive, vocational program.[159]

The vocational education program is improving however. Compared to earlier decades of this century, vocational education had taken great strides forward by the 1970s. With the growth of vocational high schools, vocational education in the practical arts is increasingly providing for a larger proportion of our population that will engage in industrial, agricultural, clerical, and domestic occupations.[160] Dr. Briggs commented: "What promises a reasonable return to the State, directly or indirectly, can be justified in the public school curriculum; what does not, cannot be."[161]

"It is well known that citizens for the most part are lethargic about education,"[162] Briggs stated in 1968. Citizens pay their taxes more or less willingly as a compulsory traditional duty, have some pride in their schools, and usually leave the planning of the programs to administrators and teachers. Briggs emphasized the point that citizens are seldom concerned enough to appraise the results. "There being no general public agreement on clearly stated

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[159]Ibid.

[160]Krug, The Shaping of the American High School, pp. 239-241.

[161]Briggs, Are You Educated About Education?, p. 107.

[162]Pamphlet Briggs Club, p. 18.

directive objectives, there can be no sensible audit of results."[163]

Up to the present time in history most citizens have rested comfortably - secure in the knowledge that, according to their school boards, teachers and administrators, the schools are competently doing their jobs. The fine, gleaming school buildings, the winning basketball or football teams give credence to the fact that the schools are doing a fine job; up to now these things have convinced citizens that all is well. However, evidence in a present study indicates that this way of judging the quality of education may be in for a change.[164]

Dr. Briggs felt that it was a responsibility of the educational leaders to make known to the public at large the justification that has been proposed for free and compulsory education as an investment. Briggs argued further that "every citizen ought to understand that he is making an investment, and that he should inquire as to the dividends."[165] The citizen-stockholder has the responsibility to require an audit of results of the educational efforts of schools. Briggs felt it desirable for stock-

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[163]Ibid.

[164]George Gallup, "The Public's Attitude Toward the Public High School," Phi Delta Kappan, Vol. 52, February, 1970, p. 100.

[165]Briggs, "Monosyllables," p. 17.

holders to be informed of expenditure of allocated funds, number of pupils enrolled, and the general workings of the school, but this information is not enough: it is essential, Briggs felt, that the citizens are informed of:

> To what extent youth have been so educated that there is evidence in their attitudes and actions that they are more able, and better disposed to live happily and successfully, and to contribute to the betterment of the community that has made their education possible. [166]

Briggs, stressing that the public (citizens-stockholders) should require audits of their schools, stated in The Educational Forum (1953), "like a motorist who realized the cost only when he fills the tank of his car with gasoline and then never thinks afterwards to conserve it as he drives five miles for a cake of yeast, the public is likely to forget its responsibility to see that what it pays for its schools is most efficiently and economically spent to get what they are supposed to achieve."[167]

Values would be realized, Briggs asserted, if every morning a child had to ask his father for seven dollars, or whatever amount the day's tuition cost. If that were the procedure, at the end of the day father would be much more interested to ascertain what his money

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[166]Thomas Henry Briggs, "Ideal Secondary School Curriculum Approach," Educational Digest, Vol. 17, Sept., 1951, p. 7.

[167]Idem, "Do We Get Our Money's Worth?," p. 6.

had bought. "If the child could report only information about the indirect object, the ethical dative, or the tenure of justices at the Supreme Court, it is quite possible that the parent might be actively concerned about his investment."[168] Briggs seriously questioned whether our schools could stand an audit that showed achievement totally in terms of professed objectives. Indicating the role of the individual, Briggs commented, "there is not likely to be an audit by Certified Public Accountants of your school's accomplishments in terms of achievement of the objectives that your accepted philosophy requires you to seek. . .but that is no reason why, so far as possible, you do not make such an audit yourself, day by day, week by week, and year by year, looking not primarily at the means used, but at the ends achieved."[169]

Briggs believed that it is only by individual assumption of responsibility that the necessary co-operative effort can come. "The beginning is unquestionably in an understanding that education is a serious, vital business for social welfare, and that it is a great public investment, the most important that the State can make; therefore, it should be made to pay

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[168]Idem, "Monosyllables," p. 17.

[169]Pamphlet Briggs Club, p. 19.

assured dividends. . .when there is a general conviction on this fundamental matter, a conviction so real that it eventuates in action, everything else will follow in due course of time."[170]

This pragmatic thinking follows closely that of William James who held that the importance of anything, idea or action, is to be measured by the difference it ultimately makes.[171] Briggs realized that it is easier to give verbal approval than it is to apply the philosophy consistently to any program. However, he cautioned that unless there is this conviction, progress will be slow, uncertain and aimless.[172]

In conclusion, Dr. Briggs' treatise states that:

> THE STATE SUPPORTS FREE PUBLIC SCHOOLS TO PERPETUATE ITSELF AND TO PROMOTE ITS OWN INTERESTS. EDUCATION IS, THEN, A LONG-TERM INVESTMENT THAT THE STATE MAY BE A BETTER PLACE IN WHICH TO LIVE, AND A BETTER PLACE IN WHICH TO MAKE A LIVING.[173]

The demand for better accounting of professional educational practices has been created, not only by the

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[170]Briggs, The Great Investment, pp. 138-139.

[171]Idem, Pragmatism and Pedagogy, p. 3.

[172]Idem, The Great Investment, p. 139.

[173]Idem, Improving Instruction, p. 414.

increasing pressure on tax dollars needed to support schools, but also a growing dissatisfaction with the quantity and quality of secondary school education. The public is in no mood to be assuaged by promises; educators must go from rhetoric to reality.

Thomas Briggs saw the need for a clear understanding of the principle on which free public education is based. Thomas Briggs felt it was the obligation of school officials to justify their expenditures in order to insure the continued support of the public. To this end he, in 1930, formulated his Great Investment Theory that spelled out the fact that education is an investment that must pay dividends. Dr. Briggs was aware that some people may not agree with the conclusions drawn in following the proposed principle; however, disagreement should not blind one to the soundness of the basic reason for free public education.

Regarding the effects the investment concept has had upon society, Dr. Briggs, in a 1964 interview with Dr. Seyfert of the Washington office of the National Association of Secondary School Principals, stated that the principle "has never been attacked, or disproved, or any better one substituted for it. . .or has it had the slightest effect."[174]

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[174]Taped interview with Dr. Seyfert.

Briggs held that although the concept as a justification for the provision of free and compulsory education must be recognized as sound, it has been ineffective in influencing the educational program in this country for two major reasons:

1. It is not generally understood by the public, nor is it generally understood by the teachers and administrators of our schools. The public, by and large, accepts a tradition of free education of whatever kind for all children without thinking of its justification in terms of assured values. This permits schools to contunue traditional subjects and methods, the outworn as well as the good, which have become haloed by usage with a consequent waste that the country can ill afford. Application of the investment theory would give the public a sound basis for criticism, and it would afford educators a directive that would bring about a useful curriculum change.[175]

2. The second reason the concept is not effective is that the public has never determined with a needed degree of definiteness what are the ideals of our civilization, and therefore, what is necessary to make a community a better place in which to live and a better

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[175]Briggs, "Do We Get Our Money's Worth?," pp. 6-7.

place in which to make a living. The public must decide on what it wants from education, and then should demand results in terms of the objectives that it has approved.[176] Until this is done, educators lack the important goals they should strive to achieve.

Dr. Briggs, in postulating the Great Investment Theory for secondary education, recognized the necessity for profound public interest in their educational domain. Early in his career, Briggs discovered the need for public concern in his involvement in public education as exemplified in the Speyer Experimental Junior High School.

Chapter V will present for study Thomas Briggs' contributions concerning the newly established (1920) junior high schools. The concluding portion of the chapter will deal with Briggs' participation as the Director of the Speyer School.

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[176]Ibid.

C H A P T E R V

BRIGGS: THE JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

The first decade of twentieth century America saw the rise of President Theodore Roosevelt's agrarian-urban reforms, the social consciousness of the progressive movement, and the war to end all wars, fought under the Wilsonian Democratic banner. However, no event etched the face of the growing American industrial giant more than the continued meteoric rise of the city. From 1860 to 1910 places of more than 50,000 increased in number from 16 to 109. The cities swelled to unparalleled size with the dislocation of rural and farm people to urban centers. The "new" wave of immigration from southeastern and eastern Europe by 1910 had increased the foreign born population in the United States to 13,345,000. The decline of the influential Yankee in city politics and the appearance of bossism effected a shift in political power. City bosses worked opportunistic arrangements with private business to lubricate the efficient machine of industry. A new important managerial class began to appear on the social scene.[1] In 1906, Upton Sinclair, a

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[1]Hofstadter, The Age of Reform, pp. 172-179.
Note: The population of the United States in 1910 was 91,972,266.

leading muckraker with a socialistic bent, wrote the Jungle, which exposed the unbridled ruthlessness and lawlessness in the Chicago meat packing business. His journalistic popularizing of a growing industrial problem sparked President Theodore Roosevelt to fight for adoption of the consumer sponsored Pure Food and Drug Act of 1906. The new immigrants desired more humanitarian treatment, not efficiency for efficiency's sake, in the occupational process.

The material results of the rise of capitalism in the 1890s had two great effects on the country after 1900. One was the rise of the industrial-business combine with its new position of authority and influence and its promoting the industrial-business value system. The other was the reform movement of President Theodore Roosevelt and the muckraking journalists, such as Lincoln Steffens and Ida Tarbell. These evolvements, plus the susceptibility of school administrators to new trends in management, seemed to explain the influences of Frederick Taylor, an engineer who won acclaim for his part in the development of high speed steel in 1900, and his method of scientific management and its protracted impact on the American value system after 1910. Interestingly, one of the leading proponents for change in curriculum to fit practical needs was the steel tycoon Andrew Carnegie. He believed that college students wasted their talents studying Greek and Latin. Franklin Bobbitt, Professor

of educational administration at the University of Chicago 1910 to 1918, compared the world of the factory to the world of the school, seeing youth as raw material, the adult as the finished product, the teacher as worker, the school supervisor as foreman and the curriculum as process; this was a form of educational engineering.[2]

Many educators in the early 1900s who had the conviction that the environment shaped social behavior considered the cities harmful to healthy human development. When they were frustrated in shaping their program to this end, they internalized their interest to the school itself. They became convinced that the goal of schooling was to run schools efficiently. Standardized testing, curriculum, pedagogy, teacher professionalism became the center of their interests. David Snedden and E. L. Thorndike, with their blending of science and technology, gave impetus to this purpose. The general social concerns, which stamped the early progressive period, became diverted when school systems became bureaucratic institutions. There was a feeling among social reformers to democratize the schools.[3]

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[2]Raymond E. Callahan, Education and the Cult of Efficiency (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1962), pp. 2-8.

[3]Drost, David Snedden and Education for Social Efficiency, pp. 177-180; ref. also noted in: Clarence J. Karier, Paper presented at Southeastern Regional Meeting, History of Education Society, November 1971, p. 4.

The social engineer idea of the educational organization saw schools as a feeder system to the cog of the industrial complex. The birth of vocational guidance and the junior high school was a response to the specialized needs of the American society in the early 1900s. In the previous century skilled workers were trained on the job. As large scale manufacturing developed, skills became more diverse, workers more mobile and the money necessary to train skilled workers more risky, industry turned to schools for pre-work training. Gradually the schools were given the responsibility of differentiating the work force prior to student's advancement into the vocational field. In New York City, at Teachers College, Columbia, in the 1900s was a strange mix of science and faith, trust in the revolutionary spirit of making old values work amid the abrasiveness and the harshness of the industrial movement. To some the junior high school movement was the wedding of the needs of the corporate industrial state to the offerings of the school. An alliance between government and corporate wealth put together in the progressive movement prior to World War I and further developed during the Great Depression and World War II came to full fruition in the post war years in the form of the military industrial complex.[4] To others the junior high

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[4]Joel Spring, Education and the Rise of the Corporate State (Boston: Beacon Press, 1972), pp. 166-167.

school was an attempt to socialize the needs of the school to assist the individual in finding his purpose of life. It was the idealistic pragmatic progressive educational program that furthered the dream of American people for individualism through the socialization of the school. It was through this intelligent use of science and technology that a better life for mankind was to be achieved.

To Thomas H. Briggs who, in 1911, was beginning his first year at Teachers College, the junior high school movement was an opportunity both personally and professionally to firm his own view in this growing turbulence of educational and social change. Every new movement in education, if it is to succeed at all, must pass through two critical stages of development before it can find its proper place. The first stage is that in which the new movement struggles for recognition by educators and by the public. The second stage is that in which public support has been won, but actual practice is incomplete, and the character or status of the new movement is still to be established. The success or failure of the movement may be determined at either of these stages. Such was the situation in 1920, concerning the embryonic junior high school.

Although little more than a decade had passed since its real beginning in this country (1910), the era of the 1920s represented a time when the junior high school movement was in a very critical stage of its development. The

question was not so much whether the junior high school would be recognized as a part of our public school system, but what sort of a junior high school would be formed, and what sort of an education would it provide. Hundreds of junior high schools established in almost all parts of the country gave credence to the fact that the new institution met with general approval. Reporting in School Review in 1924, James Glass stated:

> Thirty-five cities (of 68 with populations of 100,000 or more in 1920 of which inquiry was made) report junior high schools in operation. Nine additional cities report junior high schools under construction. Four additional cities report junior high schools authorized. Two additional report the adoption of the junior high school plan of organization, and one city reports that adoption is favorably considered, making 51 (80 percent) that have taken positive or favorable action.[5]

The organization of these schools increased rapidly; 387 independent units had been established by 1922, and by 1938 the number reported was 2,372.[6] Although there was a great deal of reorganization of the junior high schools in name during the 1920s, reorganization of the junior high schools in fact was attempted in too few of these institu-

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[5]James M. Glass, "Present Status of the Junior High School in Cities of More Than 100,000 Population," School Review, Vol. 32, October 1924, pp. 598-600.

[6]Briggs, Secondary Education (revised ed.), p. 57.

tions. There was a great need for clear orientation and for recognition of new educational standards.

Thomas Briggs was one of the leaders in the development of the junior high school. The purpose of this chapter is to present Briggs' contributions, so far as they can be ascertained, concerning the newly established junior high schools. What were the justifications for the establishment of the junior high school? What were the peculiar functions of the junior high school? What curriculum changes would have to be adopted, if any, to meet the junior high school plan of organization? What was Thomas Briggs' role in dealing with these problems? This chapter will also include Briggs' participation as Director of the Speyer School, an experimental junior high school at Columbia University.

There were many factors involved in bringing about the reorganization of the American school system as represented by the establishment of the junior high school. One of the most influential factors was the developing argument for the theory concerning stages in the development of the child. The early developmentalists made no recommendations for changes in the established organization of the school system, either in regard to administrative control or to levels in instruction. 18th

century educator and philosopher Johann Pestalozzi (1746-1827) was so closely concerned with elementary education, German educator Johann Herbart (1776-1841) with secondary education, and nineteenth century German educator Friedrich Froebel (1782-1852) with kindergarten, that they gave little attention to the problems of articulation and reorganization. It remained for G. Stanley Hall (1844-1924) to make the first start in this direction, although in Italy educator Maria Montessori (1869-1952) established her casa in an effort to fit the child to life.[7]

Dr. Hall, a Massachusetts born educator and psychologist, believed that educational development proceeds in distinct stages with somewhat abrupt breaks at certain points.[8] He also believed that different phases of development began at different stages rather than developed side by side; as a result of these theories, Hall suggested that there should be distinct levels of schools, organized on the basis of the changes in the child's life and his development. He divided this development into four general stages: (1) infancy (birth to four years), (2) childhood

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[7]William Gruhn and Harl Douglass, The Modern Junior High School (New York: The Ronald Press Co., 1956), pp. 39-40.

[8]Luella Cole, A History of Education, Socrates to Montessori (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1950), p. 581.

(four to eight years), (3) youth (eight to twelve or thirteen years), (4) adolescence (puberty to full maturity at twenty-two to twenty-five years).[9] Dr. Briggs was in agreement with Hall's theory in recognizing the need to reorganize the schools to parallel the physiological and psychological growth, from one level to another, of the child.[10]

Prior to 1920, new educational theories had been developed which were changing conditions in the United States. Greater numbers of pupils were continuing in school beyond the elementary grades. The combination of these basic factors during the 1910-1920 period constituted arguments for the reorganization of the secondary school. The result was the emergence of the junior high school, which usually encompassed the grades seven through nine. It was recognized that even though the grades might be numbered serially from one to twelve, the transition from the eighth elementary grade to the four-year high school was too abrupt in every way. The junior high school, in general, aspired:

1. to begin postprimary education in the seventh instead of the ninth grade, and

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[9]Ibid., p. 583.

[10]G. Stanley Hall, Adolescence (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1905), p. 453.

2. to provide three years of exploration or orientation before entering the three-year senior high school for specialization.[11]

Thus developed the 6-3-3 plan (six years of primary, three years junior high and three years senior high school), or, less often, the 6-6 plan (six years primary and six years high school).[12] In the 1920s almost three-fourths of all secondary schools were organized in a way to supply the distinctive middle-school service between childhood and approaching adulthood; the majority followed the 6-3-3 plan.[13]

Historically, a reorganization of the school system had been suggested much earlier than 1910. President Charles W. Eliot of Harvard University had recommended its desirability, and the Committee of Ten of the National Education Association in 1893, and the Committee on College Entrance Requirements in 1899, recommended a re-division of the system into two six-year periods.[14] The establishment of the first junior high schools followed the

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[11] I. L. Kandel, The New Era in Education (Cambridge: Houghton-Mifflin Company, 1955), p. 303.

[12] Ibid., pp. 303-304.

[13] Krug, The Shaping of the American High School, p. 334.

[14] Leonard V. Koos, The American Secondary School (Boston: Ginn and Company, 1927), p. 222.

endorsement of the idea by the Committee of Five of the National Education Association in 1905, 1908, and 1909.[15] The active development of the junior high school movement may be said to have begun in California with the reorganization in Berkeley by Bunker in 1909, and in Los Angeles by Francis in 1910.[16]

Dr. Thomas H. Briggs, who frequently was called "the father of the junior high school"[17] (although he denied paternity), in 1918-1919 had the unique privilege of personally visiting more than sixty junior high schools, from Massachusetts to California, and from Minnesota to Texas. Given a grant by the Carnegie Corporation of New York, Briggs spent six months making a first-hand investigation of the embryonic junior high schools,[18] checking their status, their defects and merits, and giving constructive program suggestions for the development of the schools.[19] The information obtained was supplemented by a study of all available literature on the subject of reorganization, by questionnaires returned from many junior high schools, and by conferences and correspon-

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[15]Ibid.

[16]Briggs, The Junior High School, p. 32.

[17]Taped interview with Dr. Warren C. Seyfert, Washington, D. C., August, 1964.

[18]Ibid.

[19]Ibid.

dence with administrators, several hundred of whom had been students in Briggs' classes.[20] His consummate labors resulted in the publication of The Junior High School (1920), a book that Dr. Briggs hoped would give assistance in the determination of the character and status of the fledgling junior high school.

Justification for the establishment of the junior high school was touched upon in the Cardinal Principles of Secondary Education (1918).[21] The declaration favored an intermediate school suitable to the needs of children in the seventh, eighth, and ninth grades, in addition to favoring some form of education appropriate to every youth up to the age eighteen and cosmopolitan high schools. In their recognition of shortcomings in the educational practices during the second decade of this century, the advocates of the new junior high school asserted that it would remedy a world of defects. It was felt that junior high schools would be a bridge in the gap between the elementary grades and secondary education; they would provide for the needs of children in early adolescence and they would help direct these children intelligently toward work or advanced study.[22]

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[20]Briggs, The Junior High School, p. 322.

[21]Bulletin 35, 1918.

[22]Briggs, Secondary Education, pp. 96-97.

A committee of the National Association of Secondary School Principals, Paul C. Stetson, Chairman, in its preliminary report, 1918, strongly advocated that the junior high school be considered "essentially a finding place" for individual pupils.[23] It was felt that such an understanding of programs other than one's own is, in a way, cultural, and also that it contributed to the general integration essential in a democracy.[24] The Commission on the Reorganization of Secondary Education recommended that:

> . . .the pupil ordinarily should be assisted at about twelve or thirteen to begin to make a preliminary survey of the activities of adult life, and of his own aptitudes in connection therewith, so that, in part, he may choose at least tentatively some field of human endeavor for special consideration. Following the period of preliminary survey and provisional choice, he should have opportunity to acquire a more intimate knowledge of the field chosen, including therewith an appreciation of the social significance of that field, and for those whose schooling ends here some mastery of the technique involved. The field chosen will be for some as sharply defined as a specific trade; for others, it will be but the preliminary choice of a wider domain within which a narrower choice will later be made.[25]

This statement by the Commission related to Issue Six formulated by the Committee on the Orientation of

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[23]Briggs, The Junior High School, p. 171.

[24]Ibid., p. 172.

[25]Bulletin 35.

Secondary Education (Thomas Briggs, Chairman), "Shall secondary education primarily have in mind preparation for advanced studies or be primarily concerned with the value of its own courses regardless of a student's future academic aspirations?".[26] The task of providing differentiated curricula was one of the responsibilities of the junior high school wherever possible. Writing in 1930, Briggs stated, "The argument for differentiated curricula is based on individual differences and on the demands of the world for a wide variety of specializations. . .individuals differ greatly at adolescence in interests, aptitudes, capacities, knowledge, skills, and needs. . .no higher curriculum can be equally good for all."[27]

The reasoning for differentiated curricula goes back to 1905 when new light on the period of adolescence appeared with G. Stanley Hall's monumental work Adolescence (preceded by Hall's Youth).[28] Hall focused attention on the period of adolescence as a period of physical and mental growth, and of new and changing interests.[29] The

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[26]Briggs, "Issues of Secondary Education," p. 212.

[27]Idem, Secondary Education, p. 226.

[28]I. L. Kandel, History of Secondary Education (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin Company, 1930), p. 485.

[29]Ibid.

appearance of Hall's work stimulated a series of special investigations into the meaning of adolescence (an example being Dr. Briggs' investigations concerning junior high schools). Educational needs were changing. Hall's analysis revealed how social changes and interests produced by the growing urban environment (a result of rapid industrial developments) contrasted with life in a predominantly agricultural environment.[30]

Another argument for differentiated curricula advanced by Briggs dealt with the old problem of elimination[31] (termination of schooling at the seventh or eighth grade level). "All youth do not, for one reason or another remain in school through the secondary period . . .some become impatient to enter upon productive work or marriage. . .no program, much less a single curriculum, the values of which they cannot appreciate, is likely to hold them."[32]

Speaking in the language of his Great Investment Theory, Briggs wrote, ". . .if an equal opportunity is guaranteed for youth, it must be a differentiated opportunity. . .it is only through an education varied so far

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[30]Ibid., p. 486.

[31]Thomas Henry Briggs, "The Fetish of the Physical," School and Society, Vol. 33, No. 856, May 23, 1931, p. 678.

[32]Idem, Secondary Education, p. 226.

as possible to suit all sorts of different people that the highest dividends can be paid. If differentiated education is not offered in secondary schools, there is no insurance that the great majority of adolescents will get such training as will contribute best to their happiness and to their effectiveness."[33]

Dr. Briggs noted that even though differentiation was the ideal in theory, in practice it was not always possible. "The beginnings of differentiation should be in the junior high school so that pupils may go on gradually to more completely individualized work; but it is obvious that the smaller the school, the less differentiation is possible."[34] In 1930, one-fourth of all secondary school students were in schools with enrollments below 100.[35] For them and for students in schools slightly larger, no amount of differentiation was possible; and even in schools with enough students to make differentiation a possibility, there was often a single curriculum because it was easier to administer or more economical.[36] However, when only one curriculum could

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[33]Ibid.

[34]Briggs, The Junior High School, p. 177.

[35]Idem, Secondary Education, p. 225.

[36]Ibid.

be offered, it was postulated that it should be so constructed as to promise the maximum return to the local community and to the majority of pupils in the class.[37]

Thomas Briggs believed his contribution to the junior high movement was partly in recognizing the advantages of a middle school and popularizing them; not only in his classes, but also in book and magazine articles, and in speeches to educators and the lay public in all parts of the United States.[38]

Briggs made a point of emphasizing the tremendous individual differences that exist in pupils. He stated, "Psychology has revealed by its research that there are considerable differences in the psychic needs of the middle-aged pupils, and that could be provided for best in a spearate institution (the junior high school)."[39]

It was critical for the schools not only to identify these individual differences, but to provide for them as never before. Dr. Briggs did not feel it was possible to find these differences "by inspection, or even by giving students large courses and then failing them; it must be done gradually by courses of study that are

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[37]Briggs, The Junior High School, p. 177.

[38]Pamphlet, The Briggs Club, p. 24.

[39]Taped interview with Dr. Seyfert.

valuable in themselves, precluding a loss of time and of interest which create boredom and dropouts."[40]

Up to approximately 1920, there had been little or no agreement on just what the functions of the junior high should be. Briggs emphasized that simply putting certain groups of pupils together as they had not been before was not reason enough to justify the establishment of junior high schools.[41] Drawing upon knowledge gained from his first-hand investigation of more than sixty junior high schools, information attained from reading literature on the problems regarding reorganization of schools, and his personal contacts with school officials, Dr. Briggs brought forth what he considered to be his most valuable contribution to the junior high school movement. That contribution was the formulation by Briggs of five unique functions, or purposes of the junior high school:

Function 1

To continue, in so far as it may seem wise and possible, and in a gradually decreasing degree, common, integrating education.

Function 2

To ascertain and reasonably to satisfy pupil's important immediate and assured future needs (the Golden

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[40] Ibid.

[41] Ibid.

Rules of Education - Chapter III).

Function 3

To explore, by means of material in itself worthwhile, the interests, aptitudes, and capacities of pupils.

Function 4

To reveal to pupils, by material otherwise justifiable, the possibilities in the major fields of learning.

Function 5

To start each pupil on the career which, as a result of the exploratory courses, he, his parents, and the school are convinced is most likely to be of profit to him and to the State (investing community).[42]

"It is not assumed that a sudden reorganization of schools on the principles outlined is either possible or probable,"[43] wrote Briggs. As a result Briggs presented his five-point program for junior high schools to help clarify the issues, and to serve as a guide in planning the changes in schools for early adolescents. "An ideal must exceed possibilities of entire fulfillment, otherwise it will cease to be of practical stimulus."[44]

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[42]Thomas Henry Briggs, ed., The Classroom Teacher (Chicago: The Classroom Teacher, Inc., 1927), Vol. 10, p. 29.

[43]Idem, The Junior High School, p. 27.

[44]Ibid.

Dr. Briggs originated two principles regarding curriculum: variety and continuity.[45] These two principles, (1) "that a curriculum by variety of offering should prepare for a rounded life," and (2) "that every unit should have either a considerable continuity or assured value in its smallest units,"[46] should, to a great extent, determine selection of subject matter. The application to the junior high school of these two stated principles must be made, according to Briggs, in terms of the purposes of this period of education.

The first of the five purposes is "to continue, in so far as it may seem wise and possible, and in a gradually decreasing degree, common, integrating education."[47] (Integration by common knowledge, ideals, attitudes and prejudices). It is likely that after the sixth grade there will remain many details that have not been taught, because of the mistaken conception of what all people should know or because of the immaturity of the pupils. When presented in the seventh, eighth, ninth, (or higher grades) these continue the integrating effect of education, and also result in the desired, gradual move toward total differentiation. In order to make the greatest contri-

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[45]Ibid., p. 160.

[46]Ibid.

[47]Briggs, The Classroom Teacher, p. 30.

bution to the children, the curriculum must be formulated to serve both the full-term student (retention), and the student who will leave as soon as permitted by law (elimination).[48] Dr. Briggs stated: "It is quite possible that the amount of this common, integrating education should be determined by the holding power of the school; however profitable a curriculum may be to the children remaining in school, it has not made its maximum contribution to society unless it serves both to hold longer the large number who leave as soon as permitted by law and to profit them also. . .when compulsory education laws are changed so as generally to hold pupils until they are sixteen or eighteen years of age, the whole question as to the amount of common, integrating education may be opened anew; but until that time we must formulate our programs in accordance with the facts of elimination and retention."[49]

The first purpose of the junior high school is not achieved only by the regular curricular subjects, such as English, mathematics, history, but also by extra-curricular activities, such as school clubs and assemblies.[50] An additional way of achieving the first purpose is through

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[48]Ibid.

[49]Briggs, The Junior High School, pp. 162-163.

[50]Ibid.

the association of children with widely different backgrounds and goals, all of whom make and share common surroundings with their traditions, prejudices and ideals. "The economic values of early differentiating schools (junior high schools) preparing for academic, industrial, or commercial life, must be great indeed to justify the loss of social integration in the common school."[51]

The second purpose of the junior high school is to "ascertain and reasonable to satisfy pupil's important immediate and assured needs."[52] Briggs wrote of differences - differences in mental capacities, in age, in economic status and in family traditions toward education... "because it is beyond the power of the school to effect these differences, it is necessary to provide differentiated training, and this can wisely be done only after a serious effort has been made to ascertain what differences, especially in interests, aptitudes, and capacities, exist and necessitate different direction or training."[53] The effort to make all pupils alike, an all too common practice in the traditional school, has resulted not only in unsatisfactory training of those for whom the curriculum was primarily prepared, but also in eliminations.[54]

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[51] Ibid.

[52] Briggs, The Classroom Teacher, p. 31.

[53] Ibid.

[54] Idem, The Junior High School, p. 165.

The acceptance of the obligation to prepare for the important immediate and assured future needs of individuals may make it necessary to introduce certain courses earlier than usual. This practice could be avoided if the schools were assured of an opportunity of introducing the courses later. Dr. Briggs cites the following example:

> In the Bloom Junior High School of Cincinnati, the pupils of which as a rule only remain through the ninth grade, offered a course in the care of infants. A trained nurse and a kindergartner cooperate in teaching the girls how to bathe, dress, feed, entertain, and generally care for children from birth to the time they enter school. Although many of these girls are 'helpers' to small brothers and sisters at home, it may be admitted that such a course would be better if offered later, shortly before maternity; but no such agency exists either for presenting such a course at that time or for compelling attendance. Therefore it is felt that social welfare justifies the junior high school in undertaking the task. . .[55]

The important immediate and assured future needs of pupils are discovered only after a careful and continued study of local conditions, the goals of pupils, and the backgrounds of older people who have developed in a similar environment.[56] Briggs was aware that it might not be possible to be completely accurate regarding these needs, therefore, "approximation is better than a continuance of training that is known not to satisfy both immediate or

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[55]Ibid.

[56]Ibid.

future needs of pupil."[57] The needs of children living in a city ghetto are different from those living in a suburban or farm area. Using the immediate environment to full advantage, a metropolitan junior high school might utilize weekly excursions to local museums, art institutes, memorials and public works to stimulate the study of history, fine arts, civics and language. A rural school might adopt the same general plan, substituting other institutions, not only because they are accessible, but because they are the ones that will probably affect the future lives of most of its pupils to the largest degree.[58]

The third purpose of the junior high school is "to explore, by means of material initself worthwhile, the interests, aptitudes, and capacities of pupils."[59] This purpose, like the second, is based on differences that must be recognized; differences that become increasingly important as pupils approach the age of leaving school. The wasted effort to make scholars of pupils who have aptitudes for mechanics, has been witnessed too many times in the past.[60] Briggs felt that the American high school

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[57]Briggs, The Classroom Teacher, p. 31.

[58]Ibid.

[59]Idem, The Junior High School, p. 165.

[60]Idem, The Classroom Teacher, p. 33.

is justly criticized when its product is compared with that of certain European secondary schools that segregate their pupils and prepare them according to their capacities.[61] "Only by providing at adolescence," wrote Dr. Briggs, "can we hope to give an 'equal' chance to all future citizens."[62]

Sensible exploration (of interests, aptitudes and capacities) is positive, not negative - it seeks to learn what each individual is good for, not that in which he will fail.[63] The old type of secondary school offered a program of studies that showed, by failures, eliminations, and neglect after graduation, that it was unsuited to a large percentage of pupils. In other words, its success was in negative results. The purpose of the new type of secondary school is positive; to learn what is suited, not what is unsuited, to individual pupils.[64]

The fourth purpose of the junior high school was "to reveal to pupils, by materials otherwise justifiable, the possibilities in the major fields of learning."[65] For a long time high schools attempted something of this kind

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[61]Briggs, The Junior High School, p. 166.

[62]Ibid.

[63]Idem, "Fetish of the Physical," p. 681.

[64]Idem, The Junior High School, p. 167.

[65]Idem, The Classroom Teacher, p. 33.

in Latin and mathematics, but used the most valuable material only if the pupils were continuing to higher levels of education. The high school, in other words, emphasized deferred values, and in doing so contributed far less than it might have to pupils who were eliminated or who transferred to other curricula.[66] The junior high school proposed to expose pupils earlier to the possibilities in higher education - intellectual and esthetic, as well as vocational - "in order that each pupil may be prepared to share in making an intelligent and informed decision as to his own future."[67]

General reasons stated for exploratory, "try-out," courses:

> This exploration gives each pupil some knowledge of the general field more exhaustively studied in higher courses, and thus enables him to choose more wisely his future curriculum. Our system of electives in the senior high school and in college pre-supposes an intelligent and informed elector; under the old system he might be intelligent, but he could not be informed. If such exploring courses should lead a pupil into a general elective which later he might wish to change, he could still do so and not be more retarded in his progress than most pupils are today. Exploration at the age of twelve to fourteen is much more economical than it is two or more years later.[68]

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[66] Briggs, The Junior High School. p. 163.

[67] Idem, "Fetish of the Physical," p. 681.

[68] Idem, Proceedings of the Fifty-Second Convocation of the University of the State of New York, 1916, pp. 97-99.

The fifth, and final purpose of the junior high school was "to start each pupil on the career which, as a result of the exploratory courses, he, his parents, and the school are convinced was most likely to be of profit to him and to the State" (investing community).[69] Briggs stressed a realistic approach with regard to current curriculum and future career: "Based on exploratory courses of the pupil's interests, aptitudes, and capacities, the beginning of differentiation in work should be more in accord with life needs than it can be under the present organization."[70] Some young people, like some adults, change their goals after launching on a specific curriculum. Those pupils who wish to change courses do so suffering only a minimum loss, as the junior high school differentiation is gradual, but, Briggs noted, "it is only reasonable to hold that every change of life purpose must be paid for in time and effort."[71]

The Solvay (New York) Junior High School had an adjustment year for those pupils who had started work that later proved to be unsatisfactory.[72] Most schools,

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[69]Briggs, The Classroom Teacher, p. 23.

[70]Idem, The Junior High School, p. 175.

[71]Ibid.

[72]Ibid.

however, were likely to transfer pupils from one curriculum to another with an actual loss of learning, but with little or no penalty toward graduation (author's note: "graduation" in this time period could mean that the eighth or ninth grade was the terminal point for formal education). As a matter of fact, "graduation" from the junior high school received less and less attention as pupils were sent onward to higher work for which they were prepared.

The fifth purpose, Dr. Briggs stressed, is after exploration to start pupils on differentiated work; the suggestions are that the differentiation has been rationally determined, that it is gradual, and that it furnishes a transition to the period when each individual assumes the responsibility for his own future.[73] In short, if the work that the pupil has begun proves interesting, adapted to his capabilities, and promising for his future vocation, the pupil should find some way of continuing it. Otherwise, chances are strong that as soon as the pupil leaves the junior high school he will turn to something else, most likely discontinuing his formal education altogether.[74] "The school, then, assumes the responsibility not only of

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[73]Briggs, The Classroom Teacher, p. 33.

[74]Ibid.

directing the exploration, but also of helping to so sound a decision and so profitable a beginning of differentiated work that it will be continued in other types of schools as long as it proves profitable."[75]

To summarize briefly, the fifth purpose as Briggs outlined it:

> While it is still economical to do so, the school will direct the first experimental excursions into specialization, excursions that may be replaced by others equally tentative until the most promising road is found. Changes of direction are much less costly in every sense during this period than they ever will be again - the later they are made, the more expensive they are.[76]

The foregoing principles, Briggs' Five Functions of the junior high school, represented the ideals to be found in the junior high school. Aware of the foils of the ideal, Briggs, in 1920, wrote, "it will be futile to look anywhere for a perfect exemplification in practice of these ideals; the movement is too young, the demands of physical reorganization have been too pressing, and the possibilities have often been conceived in too limited a manner."[77] The spread and continuance of the junior high school depended largely, said Briggs, on the adaptations of curricula and courses that would satisfy social and

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[75]Briggs, The Junior High School, pp. 175-176.

[76]Idem, "Fetish of the Physical," p. 681.

[77]Ibid.

career demands. "Some general principles - either those presented by me, or substitutions for them - are needed, and the more frankly such principles are considered, the greater the probabilities of educational success."[78]

Regarding the immediate aftereffects of his proposal, Dr. Briggs, during an interview with Dr. Seyfert in 1964, recalled that:

> The statement (of the Five Functions) has never, so far as I know, been negatively criticised. The administrators, educators and teachers say that the statements are fine, but they are very difficult to put into effect. I realize that, and have emphasized over and over again the need of a Curriculum Research Laboratory that would prepare the raw materials which teachers can formulate into teaching units and preserve their freedom to adapt to local needs.[79]

Refining his statement later in the same interview, Briggs noted: "The functions were generally approved in theory, although most educators could not see means of immediately putting them into practice. They could, however, if they understood and believed in the statement of the functions, made modifications of courses of study (little by little), and introduced the new features to be suitable and stimulating to pubescent pupils."[80]

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[78]Briggs, The Junior High School, p. 178.

[79]Interview with Dr. Seyfert.

[80]Ibid.

Dr. Briggs stressed again that physical relocation of pupils was not enough to justify the junior high school, but that positive changes in the curriculum were needed. Speaking to Dr. Seyfert, Dr. Briggs commented: "It is easy enough to move pupils of a certain age from several buildings into one central building and to call this a junior high school; but the justification is primarily in what is done after the congregation of homogeneous pupils. That can be accomplished by radical changes in the curriculum - making it suitable for the needs of the pupils and preparing them to enter the senior high school with an intelligent understanding of the challenges that that institution holds for them."[81] Dr. Fred T. Wilhelms, Briggs' close associate and friend, capsuled Briggs' thought concerning curriculum when he stated: "I believe that there are needs so pressing that they place absolutely overriding demands on us to produce curriculum that does what it is meant to do."[82]

Briggs reasoned one step farther: "As I have said previously, schools are organized that they may be administered, and they are administered that they may be instructed, and what instruction presents is more important

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[81] Ibid.

[82] Fred T. Wilhelms, "Priorities in Change Efforts," in Curriculum: Quest for Relevance, ed. by William Van Til (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin Company, 1974), p. 297.

than all the physical re-organization, and all of the skilled administration by principals and teachers that can be provided."[83]

Pragmatic in the philosophy that education must function,[84] Briggs attempted to show how facts of psychology should be applied to education. Briggs advocated segregation of the sexes during the junior high school years arguing..."if the psychology of adolescence means anything, i.e., that girls have a period of rapid development - boys a year or two later, it indicated that we ought to have sex segregation in the junior high school period, and integration in the elementary and senior high school periods."[85]

In April, 1931, Dr. Briggs delivered an address to the Junior High School Principal's Association of New York. The address, which appeared in School and Society the following month, revealed interesting observations, and criticisms compiled by Briggs. It indicated what progress, if any, the junior high school had made in the ten years following the publication of The Junior High School (1920).

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[83]Thomas Henry Briggs, Curriculum Problems (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1927), p. 1.

[84]Pamphlet, Briggs Club, p. 10.

[85]Briggs, "Fetish of the Physical," p. 678.

One of the claims originally set up for the junior high school was that it would reduce the elimination at the end of the seventh and eighth grades - "which at that time (pre-junior high school) was lamentable."[86] The problem was not apparent ten years later, but not because of the institution called junior high school. Briggs commented:

> . . .that claim is seldom voiced now, for forces more powerful than the junior high school have been operative - laws for compulsory attendance, changes in industry that make the labor of pubescent children unprofitable, a large increase in the number of working women at the very time when inventions have decreased the amount of labor needed in our Republic, and at the time when our tariff laws and a world-wide depression have seriously limited what we can export. But more important than all these factors and implicated with them is the fetish of higher education that has steadily grown in minds of our people. . .
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> It is not primarily the education offered by our traditional high schools or colleges that youth wish and that parents wish for their children, but the stamp of education.[87]

Dr. Briggs regretted that there was no retribution for such an act. . ."the law provides severe punishment for those who mis-brand packages of food or of drugs; but unfortunately there is no legal penalty for putting the brand of 'educated' on youth who have merely gone through the routine, and who exhibit no inward

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[86] Briggs, "Fetish of the Physical," p. 677.

[87] Ibid.

change, intellectual or spiritual."[88]

The old problem of elimination in the 1920s became the new problem of persistence in the 1930s. "More pupils persist into high schools than can profit by what is offered, but the fetish (for the educational stamp) drives them on."[89] Some theorists of the day argued that only the students who prove their competence should be admitted to secondary education - that it should be "a privilege and not a right."[90] Briggs pointed out reasons this argument could not be approved in the United States of America: (1) "We profess democracy, and even though we do not practice it in provisions of a sufficiently differentiated secondary education, deep down in our hearts we believe in it. Despite the prostitutions to which it has been put, we know that it is better than any other form of society or of government of which the world has yet conceived. It can be achieved only by an education that is concerned with its responsibility to give each and every embryonic citizen the training that is suited to his needs, interests and capacities."[91] Education as a privilege - not as a right - was the general

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[88] Ibid.

[89] Ibid., p. 679.

[90] Ibid.

[91] Ibid., p. 680.

practice in ante bellum Europe, the children with social and economic advantages being the chief ones to have even an opportunity to qualify. Briggs stated that the second reason (2) our society cannot approve an aristocratic secondary education is that, "neither commerce nor industry has any need for the number of youth that would, under such a program, be ejected from the schools. Already we have tragic unemployment as the result of too many adults and machines for the work that needs to be done."[92]

The problem of persistence should not be a dilemma at all. Briggs felt the solution was to provide differentiated opportunities for education, and to guide each individual into the kind that was applicable for him or for her.[93] Briggs argued for this in his "Functions for the Junior High School" as noted earlier in the chapter. In his follow-up investigation, Dr. Briggs found that "we have neither provided a sufficient differentiation, nor have we excluded the unfit from the traditional curricula. . .moreover, we have not cogently guided pupils toward such courses of assured worth as we do offer."[94] The primary reason for this failure was a lack of effective

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[92]Briggs, "Fetish of the Physical," p. 680.

[93]Idem, The Classroom Teacher, p. 29.

[94]Idem, "Fetish of the Physical."

program development of the part of the junior high school.

The junior high school movement remained the potential solution: "The more I reflect on the tragic waste in secondary schools and colleges, the dissipation of public funds, and the deluding mis-direction of so large a part of the activities of youth, the more I am convinced that the junior high school, properly organized and directed, is the potential solution of the problem."[95] The junior high school movement accomplished, in this ten year period (1920-1930), only a small portion of what had been expected, Briggs observed. "Almost everywhere the new school was initiated without adequate preparation - it seems to be a characteristic of our nation, certainly in education, to assume that if a physical organization is effected, desired results will follow automatically."[96] Dr. Briggs exemplified the need for specific goal planning with the following anecdote:

> As I walked down the street in a prosperous Ohio town with a proud citizen, we came to a large half-completed building. 'Money for that building was left in his will by one of our oldest citizens.' What is the building to be used for when completed?' I asked. 'That we haven't decided yet,' he replied.[97]

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[95] Ibid.

[96] Ibid.

[97] Letter from Thomas Henry Briggs to author, April 7, 1971.

In looking back, Briggs opined that more effort, planning and expense went into the physical building of the institution than went into preparation for a new educational structure. "Significant changes from education come only from hard work with the most effective machinery . .planning for educational reform required more than buildings and reorganization of administrative units."[98] Commenting on the junior high school of the 1930s, Briggs stated, "it does not have it now. . .it must have such preparation for its program before it can accomplish any major part of what it can contribute, and what is pathetically needed in our system today."[99]

Dr. Briggs seriously questioned what would happen when taxpayers realized that "secondary education is an extravagant luxury rather than a wise investment paying assured dividends in youth made better able and better disposed to contribute to happier and more effective living."[100] The question was phrased in the vernacular of Briggs' Great Investment Theory which was composed during this time period (1930). He was alarmed over the waste of opportunity and of money by those who, as Briggs termed it:. . ."professed the new faith - and continued the old practices."[101]

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[98]Briggs, "Fetish of the Physical," p. 677.

[99]Ibid. [100]Ibid. [101]Ibid.

As a result of the frustration stemming from the junior high school situation, Briggs turned from constructive criticism to hostile criticism. He stated that "the complacent public needs to be disturbed that it may be actively concerned to help itself."[102] Explaining in greater detail, he commented:

> Until recently I was convinced that the best, if not the only, way to be of service in this great business of education was unprotestingly to accept conditions as they are, and constantly to attempt constructive betterment. I seldom made a hostile criticism on general practices - certainly no one could accuse me of being a destructive iconoclast. Idols with broken noses are neither beautiful nor useful. Year after year I attempted to be consistently constructive. . .I have now become convinced that we shall continue placidly to be carried along the accustomed stream (of tradition) unless we are made aware of the tremendous wastage, the loss of opportunity, even the danger to our national existence.[103]

Unfortunately hostile criticism always sounds louder than constructive proposals. . ."if at times I seem destructive in my criticism it is only to force open the ears to proposals for better practices."[104] Briggs was convinced that professional educators must do all in their power to provide a program more suited to the needs of society.

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[102] Briggs, Secondary Education, p. 366.

[103] Idem, "Fetish of the Physical," p. 682.

[104] Ibid.

The curriculum was Briggs' keystone in the educational arch. "The curriculum is the outstanding challenge today for all schools."[105] It is not sufficient that schools teach just any facts and principles; the curriculum must present to each individual those (facts and principles) that promise most for the betterment to each individual youth, whatever his characteristics - "As civilization changes, education must change."[106]

Writing in 1930, Dr. Briggs stressed that secondary education was not doing its job - "it cannot until it faces the life of today, until it teaches all the youth of today."[107] During the first decades of this century "education was believed in as though it were a newly discovered magic process."[108]

Education, however, is not magic; it works with what is given to it. Dr. Briggs believed that ideal solutions of the problems facing secondary education are as yet far off. He commented: "Secondary education is precious and must be preserved. . .if educators will follow such a program as is proposed, tedious and difficult though it

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[105]Briggs, Secondary Education, p. 16.

[106]Ibid., p. 558.

[107]Idem, "Fetish of the Physical," p. 683.

[108]James B. Conant, The Child, The Parent and The State (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1959), p. 102.

may be, secondary education will be preserved."[109] Briggs felt that the beginning of preservation is by means of a perfected junior high school.

To facilitate application of theory to practice, Thomas Briggs, in 1915, was put in charge of the Speyer Experimental School in New York City. In the concluding portion of this chapter the school, its functions, goals and results will be examined.

The Speyer School. Prior to the 1920 report Dr. Briggs compiled on the junior high school, he was put in charge of Speyer School, the first experimental junior high school in New York City. Mr. and Mrs. James Speyer donated $100,000.00 to Teachers College in 1902 to erect a school for practice teaching which integrated the functions of a free school with those of the community.[110] It replicated John Dewey's Laboratory School formed in 1896 at the University of Chicago.[111]

The Speyer School's purpose was to provide information pertaining to the formation of the ideal junior high school. At this time (1915-1920) junior high schools

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[109] Briggs, "Fetish of the Physical," p. 683.

[110] T. L. Smith, "Progressivism in American Education," Harvard Educational Review, Vol. 31, No. 2, Spring 1961, p. 184.

[111] K. C. Mayhew and A. C. Edwards, The Dewey School (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1936), p. 161.

had already been established in New York City, and they had been recommended in the program for the future without any definite understanding of what they should or could do. Dean James E. Russell of Columbia Teachers College, and Superindendent Maxwell of the New York City school system agreed that they would contribute jointly to the establishment of the Speyer Experimental Junior High School.[112]

As it was sponsored by both the City of New York and Columbia Teachers College, the city, for its part, promised to provide approximately 150 boys from the sixth grades. To furnish the administration, supplies, and the other mechanics for running the school, Teachers College, for its part, contributed the services of Dr. Thomas Briggs (not relieving him of any of his duties at the college, however) to plan and direct the experiment.[113]

In organizing the school, Dr. Briggs had to accept the curriculum, in a general way, of the City of New York; he had to accept the teachers that were supplied by the city - teachers who had no preparation for the change away from conventional curriculum and methods of teaching; and

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[112]Briggs, The Junior High School, p. 5.

[113]Taped interview with Dr. Warren Seyfert.

he had to undergo all of the restrictions that existed in New York City. These restrictions were controlled by the Central Board of Education (or the Board of Superintendents), and pertained to all of the schools of the city.[114] Once having approved the experiment, the Central Department of Education seemed to lose interest, Briggs observed, except to be sympathetic to certain appeals for help.[115]

Dr. Briggs was advised that, as Director of Speyer, he was free to get any help that he could from his colleagues at Teachers College. Only three in the entire faculty were interested and willing to give any time and effort to the experiment. The heads of the physical education, the science and the art department constituted the volunteers. Briggs commented on the non-volunteers: "They missed a marvelous opportunity to refresh their own information of young people, and also of school practices."[116]

In reviewing the situation, Briggs had differing opinions concerning the teachers. Early in the experiment he stated: "The city (New York City) staffed Speyer

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[114] Ibid.

[115] Ibid.

[116] Ibid.

with superior teachers. They were cooperative, friendly and sympathetic with what they were supposed to do."[117] Years later he stated: "I found the teachers largely incompetent."[118] Briggs possibly based the latter comment on the outcropping of a money matter that hampered the intellectual spirit of the teachers.

The Speyer teachers were the initiators of the Junior High School Teachers Association, an organization that gave promise of extending the results that they found in the experimental school to the other junior high schools in the city. "The organization started with such promise of success, but it soon became evident that the majority of the teachers of the other junior high schools were not interested in the educational program, but in getting their salaries put on the same scale as that held by the teachers in senior high schools."[119] As a consequence the program (Junior High School Teachers Association) soon died from a lack of interest that could not be revived, and the city teachers lost interest entirely in the educational functions of the junior high school.[120]

Despite the handicap of having to follow the city-adopted general curriculum, Briggs felt that consider-

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[117]Thomas Henry Briggs, "An Unforgettable Character," The Educational Forum, March 1961, p. 365.

[118]Taped interview with Dr. Seyfert.

[119]Ibid. [120]Ibid.

able progress was made in the education of the pupils by modifying what the teachers taught "inside" a subject. English, for example, may mean anything - emphasis on grammar, literature or the social setting produced in any period. The Speyer (English) teachers pursued a method that encouraged wide, independent reading of books of standard value, in spite of the fact that Speyer had no library. The pupils took advantage of the public library a block and a half away.[121]

The same held true in the field of science. Speyer had no laboratory, but they did have two excellent science teachers who were able to use simple, home-made apparatus and inculcate not only an understanding of the principles of science, but also transmitted to the pupils skills to do the things that needed scientific application at home and in the community.[122]

Speyer, unfortunately, had no musical instruments and no musical program for the boys; but there was an art department directed by an instructor loaned to Speyer by Teachers College. Briggs, as Director of the school, was cognizant of a vast lack of understanding between the art teacher and the boys. . . ."we proved this by an ingenious experiment that convinced the teacher. She was

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[121]Taped interview with Dr. Seyfert.

[122]Ibid.

trying to achieve one thing (the form that pleased her), but the boys had no understanding of her ideals and what they ranked high, she ranked low, and vise-versa. After she got that idea, our art instruction improved vastly."[123]

The innovative modes of teaching found at Speyer did not happen by accident. One of Thomas Briggs' first responsibilities, after the school opened, was to educate the teachers about the possibilities and the ideals of a junior high school. Briggs insisted upon the fact that the Speyer teachers would have wide freedom to apply in their own way plans for the achievement of any one, or all five of the stated Functions of the Junior High School.[124] The teachers were "successful in widely different ways and degrees"[125] in the applications of the Functions.

A great deal of the teaching however, was routine and differed very little from what had been done in the elementary schools, but Speyer did have some novelties. Over five decades ago, excursions were a novelty. At the Speyer School, Wednesday afternoons were set aside to acquaint the boys with the historic monuments, museums, art galleries and industries in New York City. Dr. Briggs

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[123] Ibid.

[124] Briggs, The Classroom Teacher, pp. 29 ff.

[125] Interview with Dr. Seyfert.

related one such learning experience:

> One morning I walked in the room of Miss Schwartz and saw, mounted on the blackboard, before the class was called to order, a page from a Sunday paper telling about the acquisition of a whale by the Museum of Natural History. The children gathered around and began reading what they could, and began to ask questions. As they queried, Miss Schwartz wrote on the blackboard - Is the whale a mammal? Hunting the whale - Moby Dick. At the suggestion of going down to see the whale, the boys themselves appointed a committee on transportation. Another group was appointed to write to the museum (letter writing) and ask for a guide to show us around; another committee looked up the whale in literature.
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> We had a very poor library having inherited an old elementary school building, so the boys were sent in groups of three to the Bruce Library (a public library) to collect information to write their reports. As they did not know anything about the card catalog or books of reference, they had to approach the librarian for assistance. When they obtained the books of reference, it was too much material to use, and therefore they had to learn how to read selectively. They had to learn to divide the job, to take notes and put the notes together to make a report, and that library training was exceedingly valuable training for the boys all the rest of their careers.
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> Following the excursion to the museum, each committee made an oral report to the class. Then the teacher asked if the math class might not want to hear the oral reports. At that the committee approached Mr. Burns, the math teacher, and had to sell him the idea that they had something that was worth ten minutes of his math time. Upon their return from the oral presentation the boys wrote their reports (written composition); they also wrote to the guide at the museum thanking her for the curtesies she had shown them.[126]

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[126] Thomas Henry Briggs, "The Excursion as a Means of Education," Teachers College Record, Vol. 22, November 1921, pp. 415-417; also taped interview with Dr. Seyfert.

Dr. Briggs found the excursions to be extremely profitable as a learning experience. . ."I do not know anything equal to it that is more educative than the excursions we made with the help and/or planning by the boys to the various activities and interesting places in the city."[127]

Educational studies were carried out by Briggs while at Speyer School. One of his first challenges in the reorganization of the school was to give to 150 nominated boys a "home-made," simple intelligence test so that they might be divided into classes of approximately even size. One portion of the experiment was to see if homogeneous groupings were possible or effective as there was a prevalent tendency to form homogeneous groups of pupils according to their ability to learn.[128]

This plan of homogeneous grouping would provide that the bright be recognized as well as the less bright, and that each group be taught according to need.[129] Changes from group to group were permitted whenever the teachers agreed that a pupil was better or poorer than some other one in another section. The teachers were encouraged to carry each group at its optimum pace, and for each

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[127]Taped interview with Dr. Seyfert.

[128]Briggs, The Junior High School, p. 256.

[129]Ibid., p. 147.

pupil personal guidance was provided by a teacher, supplemented by a system of oversight and aids from members of the "Leaders' Club".[130]

The conclusions reached by Briggs in his study concerning junior high school homogeneous groupings was that it was highly effective in sending boys forward in their course according to their natural gifts, their ambitions and their energy.[131] Some pupils were able to accomplish the work of three years in two; others made normal progress; and those not gifted intellectually were carried as fast as they were able to go, with changes in subject matter and in methods as needed.[132] More specifically, about one-third of the pupils completed the Speyer School work in two years, another one-third in a year and a half, and the lowest one-third took the entire three years to transfer to the senior high schools.[133]

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[130]Note: The 'Leaders' Club' was composed of one leader from each class in the Speyer School. These leaders, who were elected by the students, in the course of time, perfected a set of requirements that each boy must satisfy before he could qualify as a candidate for election as a leader. The Code, as it was called, had four sections; physical, mental, social, and moral. Any boy earning a designated minimum number of points in each section was qualified to join the club. Leaders could be elected only from members of this club.
Briggs, "An Unforgettable Character," p. 326.

[131]Taped interview with Dr. Seyfert.

[132]Briggs, The Junior High School, pp. 257-258.

[133]Taped interview with Dr. Seyfert.

Reports from the schools that received the Speyer graduates were altogether favorable: "In no case did we have a higher school complain that our pupils were not adequately prepared to enter upon and enjoy the program that the senior high school gave."[134]

One of the shortest and most simple studies that Briggs made while at Speyer School concerned the daily, traditional salute to the flag.[135] Every morning, all over the city, every child stood and, raising his hand, recited glibly, "I pledge allegiance. . ." Dr. Briggs began to suspect that this routine was largely mechanical and meant nothing to the development of the understanding, or the loyalty of the citizen to the flag. One morning, instead of having the boys recite orally, Briggs had every boy in the school write the salute to the flag. Inspection of the results confirmed Briggs' suspicion that the writing of the pledge meant very little. The writings disclosed, for example, such words as, "plejure legions," and "in the visible," indicating that the words were not even understood, to say nothing of their carrying meaning.[136]

A study concerning praise and censure as incentives was another study conducted by Briggs in the Speyer School. Briggs felt that the main problem of a supervisor was how

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[134]Ibid. [135]Ibid.

[136]Ibid.

to get better results from teaching, therefore, he was interested in the effects of various kinds of motives and incentives. In the 1920s, even though there was need of more experimental evidence on the secondary school level, it was generally agreed as a result of theory and empirical evidence that "true motive on the part of pupils produces more work, more intelligent work, and more effective work."[137] He observed that antithetic incentives frequently used by teachers are commendation, praise, encouragement, on the one hand, and censure, ridicule, and threats, on the other.[138] The amount of use of each kind was most likely determined more by the temperament of teachers than by calm judgment of the relative effects. There was, according to Dr. Briggs, considerable evidence concerning effects, all of which should be known by teachers and supervisors and used by them in modifying practices so that better results would follow.[139]

Elizabeth Hurlock, psychologist, summarized most of the existing evidence concerning praise/censure up to the mid-1920s. Her study showed that from several experiments, animals learn faster when rewarded for their trial

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[137]Thomas Henry Briggs, "Educational Research and Statistics," School and Society, Vol. XXVI, No. 671, November 5, 1927, p. 596.

[138]Ibid.

[139]Ibid.

efforts than when punished, that experienced printers, for example, tremendously increase their output under promise of a bonus, that pupils improve achievement merely through being informed of their scores, that in every reported experiment incentives of encouragement are superior to those of censure.[140] In her study she showed material improvement on intelligence test scores by pupils who were praised and encouraged.[141]

Dr. Briggs carried out a study of praise versus censure while at the Speyer Experimental Junior High School.[142] A teachers' meeting was devoted to the discussion of the relative merits of the two kinds of incentives. After opinions had been expressed on both sides, it was decided to obtain some objective evidence. Two teachers who were accustomed to use severity with their pupils were asked to conduct the experiment. First, they made new type tests on three lessions, two-fifths on judgment and the remainder on factual memory.[143]

The first test was administered by each teacher to his four classes. After glancing over the papers, Teacher A reprimanded the pupils severly, threatening them

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[140]E. B. Hurlock, "The Value of Praise and Reproof as Incentives for Children," Archives of Psychology, No. 71, July, 1924, p. 78.

[141]Ibid.

[142]Taped interview with Dr. Seyfert. [143]Ibid.

with punishment if they did not do better work; Teacher B on the other hand, commended his pupils and encouraged them to do even better on the next lesson.[144] The following day the second test was given, and after looking over the papers the teachers reversed their comments, A praising and B scolding. On the third day the last test was given. Eighty-seven percent of the pupils made better scores after commendation and encouragement.[145]

Dr. Briggs stated: "The evidence is convincing that commendation, praise and encouragement are superior to censure, ridicule, threats and punishment. . .the latter not only are ineffective with the pupils to whom they are given, but they frequently are harmful to the other members of the class.[146]

The findings of Hurlock and Briggs were not unlike the finding of the late President Lowell, of Harvard University, early in this century.[147] It concerned earthworms, and earthworms were under study at Harvard. At the turn of the century psychology was just beginning to assert its claim to know something about learning, and psychologists

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[144]Briggs, "Educational Research and Statistics."

[145]Ibid.

[146]Ibid.

[147]Harold Taylor, "Students, Teachers, Values," in The New Idea in Education, pp. 50-51.

were becoming interested in education.[148] This meant that college presidents were becoming interested in psychologists.

Accordingly, Mr. Lowell visited Professor Yerkes' laboratory one day to see what was afoot.[149] It was mostly animal psychology in those days; apes, dogs,cats, brass instruments. Mr. Lowell found Professor Yerkes experimenting with earthworms. The earthworms were spending their psychological time crawling down a maze and at a given point in the maze, where the route was blocked, approximately half of them went to the left, and the other half turned right.[150]

The earthworms who turned right were given the standard psychologists' treatment of that time, an electric shock. After that, seventy-five percent of them turned left on the next run. The other anti-intellectuals, the twenty-five percent of them, kept right on going right.[151]

After noting these results, Mr. Lowell made perhaps the most profound remark in the history of American education. He said, "They have been changed by this Harvard course, but I can't say they are any better earthworms for having been at Harvard."[152]

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[148]Ibid. [149]Ibid. [150]Ibid.

[151]Ibid. [152]Ibid., p. 51.

Mr. Lowell's remark raised the question of what changes in human nature are most desirable; and then, how do you go about deciding whether a change is for the better or worse? Is it dangerous to turn teachers loose with the personality of a child? Should educators be allowed to make whatever changes they please? Or if teachers should not decide on the changes to be made, who should? Parents? Clergymen? School administrators?

Education in the form of sex instruction was just such a question handled by the Speyer School. Sex instruction was a practice not in vogue in the 1915-1920 period. Speyer offered such a program that was initiated by an outstanding faculty member, the physical education teacher, Mr. Abraham Rosenthal. Rosenthal, knowing that at pubescence boys are avid for information about sex, felt it was far better that they should have this information sensibly given in the school than excitably and inaccurately obtained from other sources.[153] Dr. Briggs reported: "The faculty was skeptical, but did reluctantly approve the program Rosenthal proposed."[154] The first step was sending an explanatory letter asking approval by

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[153]Briggs, "An Unforgettable Character," p. 328.

[154]Ibid.

the parents of each boy and inviting them to be present, if they desired, at the general presentation of the class. "The response was an almost unanimous approval, and a few parents came and listened while their boys were instructed."[155]

After the general presentation in class, the boys were told that each one could have an appointment, if desired, for a private and personal conference in which he could ask any questions that he wished. Briggs observed, "The results of this project were wholesome, and parents, instead of protesting, gave their approval."[156]

With regard to guidance counseling in schools, Briggs observed that often students would confide to a teacher in whom they had confidence, rather than to their parents. For example, the Speyer program of physical education and health encouraged confidences that made personal guidance easy. Dr. Briggs held that "the most important agent in guidance is not the expert counselor with his scientific tests and cumulative records, important as these are, but the teacher who knows the pupils better than the expert (the expert sees them less often and in a less personal relationship)."[157] Dr. Briggs

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[155]Ibid.

[156]Ibid.

[157]Taped interview with Dr. Seyfert.

stressed that all pupils need guidance, the average pupil as well as those below and above average. "Usually with a minimum of 300 pupils to counsel, often with an impossible larger number, the expert's advice is more or less of necessity limited to problem cases, the extremely dull, and the extremely gifted, those who misbehave, and those who are obviously misplaced in the curriculum."[158]

Holding that all pupils need guidance, Briggs was aware that not all teachers are competent to give wise guidance, not every teacher invites confidences, and not every teacher is willing to give the time required.[159] Dr. Briggs expanded on what he felt described a good guidance counselor:

> To be successful in guidance a teacher must have a sympathetic and inoffensive noseiness that leads him to learn a pupil's problems, which are more often suspected than voluntarily confided. He wins confidence, and he must have common sense to give sound advice or information that will enable him to direct the pupil to those who can be more helpful. Sometimes he must arrange for a conference with an expert (professional guidance counselor). And, along with all this, he must have patience to follow-up his leads time after time, in some cases persisting to exert his influence even if at first it has been rejected. [160]

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[158]Thomas Henry Briggs, "Problems in Secondary Education That Need A Solution," School Life, Vol. 11, February, 1926, p. 118.

[159]Idem, "An Unforgettable Character," p. 328.

[160]Ibid., pp. 328-329.

For five years (1915-1920) Dr. Thomas Briggs had the practical experience afforded him as educational advisor of the Speyer Experimental Junior High School. The reaction to Speyer by the participants, i.e., the students, was positive. To support this, Briggs noted a radical change for the better in the behavior of the boys in school. . ."Discipline was no problem - when a boy in the exuberance of pubescence violated the ordinary rules of decorum, especially if he violated the Code, he was more often corrected by his follows than brought to accepted behavior by a teacher.[161] The boys would not tolerate bad behavior:

> On a trip to a museum a youngster became boisterous on the subway. Refusing to quiet down, at the next stop he was ejected from the car by his fellows and left on the station platform to find his way home as best he could. The next morning a tearful penitent appeared before the club council, apologized, and promised good behavior. The boys could not let the school reputation be impaired.[162]

Another example that Dr. Briggs reported, showing that the Speyer boys were pleased with the school program, was that for fifteen or twenty years after the school closed the alumni held an annual dinner meeting.[163]

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[161] Ibid.

[162] Taped interview with Dr. Seyfert.

[163] Briggs, "An Unforgettable Character," p. 328.

The meetings, attended by a majority of boys who lived in the neighborhood, were last held in 1969. . ."one of the alumni who had become very wealthy invited all the obtainable alumni to hold a dinner, at his expense, at one of the large hotels in New York City."[164]

Dr. Briggs once said, "A philosophy is meaningful only if it directs and stimulates a man to action... any other is such as dreams are made of."[165] Briggs, as evidenced by his work as Director of the Speyer School and by his planning for educational reforms in the embryonic junior high school, met that challenge to action.

In 1920, Briggs wrote: "In its essence the junior high school is a device of democracy whereby nurture may cooperate with nature to secure the best results possible for each individual adolescent as well as for society at large."[166] There was a need for real educational reform, a demand for purposes so clear and so cogent that the result would be new curricula, new courses of study, new methods of teaching, and new social relationships - in short, a new spirit that will make the junior high school years not only worthwhile in themselves, but also an inspiration for every child to gain as much as possible

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[164] Taped interview with Dr. Seyfert.

[165] Pamphlet, Briggs Club, p. 24.

[166] Briggs, The Junior High School, p. 327.

from his or her educational experiences.[167]

With regard to the five special Functions, developed by Dr. Briggs, he wrote: "Each function is believed to be important. . .no division of the whole educational program into units can be soundly made, no suitable courses of study can be constructed, or problems of articulation solved until the functions of the secondary school are clearly determined and made operative.. there is need for continued critical consideration of these functions, there is even greater need for immediate and vigourous effort to translate them into secondary school practice."[168]

Because the junior high school was a new type of school, its stated functions were more clear than was common in the older type institutions. This contrast forced consideration of the special functions of all schools, and this, in turn, will result, it is hoped, in curriculum offerings that are more appropriate.[169] The modern curriculum is a complex affair involving not only academic subjects,but knowledge of business, industry, economic problems, government, and politics, and reaching into almost every phase of social and individual living.[170] The

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[167]Ibid. [168]Ibid.

[169]Briggs, Secondary Education (rev. ed.), pp. 168-169.

[170]Ibid., p. 230.

continuous preparation of the basic materials which should comprise this curriculum is a task in which the experts in these special fields must be consulted. A better and more practical solution to the long-term problem of continuous curriculum reconstruction is to provide a central, national curriculum agency staffed with able, carefully selected, professional men and women working full time on this task for the benefit of schools of the entire nation.[171]

As to the future, the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development reported the following recommendations that align closely with Dr. Briggs' proposals for the junior high school five decades ago:

1. The junior high school of the future should rely upon a basic policy of experimental development of the instructional program.

So far as we now know or can predict, we never will have permanent answers regarding what constitutes the best education. . .

2. The instructional process should be planned explicitly for the junior high school years.

If young people are to examine, study, and develop commitment to articulate democratic values in the junior high school, and if these are to be years of exploration

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[171]Briggs, Secondary Education, p. 231.

and discovery in terms of self, vocational and life goals, then the kind of instructional process utilized must be geared to these purposes. . .

3. The junior high school of the future should incorporate routines and patterns that encourage civility in living.

4. Varying instructional procedures will be used to accomplish the purposes of junior high school education in the future.

It is widely agreed that during the years of early adolescence the student needs special attention and help for exploration and discovery...

5. The junior high school of the future should provide many means for the student to see himself as a significant individual in a larger world setting.

Many opportunities will be available to young people for experiences designed to help them develop personal values and commitments. One such opportunity can be provided by a school through establishing close ties with a school overseas. . .

6. Aesthetic and creative opportunities and experiences should be abundant in the junior high school of the future.

Adolescence is a time in today's world, individual maturity and serenity are hard to achieve. Yet, through aesthetic awareness and creative experiences, individuals

can find ways in which life becomes more meaningful and manageable.

7. The staff in the junior high school of the future should be given differentiated assignments.

Just as we know that young people have different talents and strengths, so we must recognize that teachers vary in their skills. . .

8. The junior high school of tomorrow should provide extended guidance for all students.

Adolescence is a crucial period in which many fateful decisions are made - to go to college, to leave school, to prepare for a vocation. Youngsters at this age need all the help that trained personnel can give them.

9. New developments in technology and in materials of instruction should be utilized in the junior high school of tomorrow.

10. Gaining knowledge, skill and understanding are basic goals for junior high school pupils.

Knowledge must be meaningful; skills must relate to use; and understanding needs a foundation in reasoned and disciplined thought.[172]

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[172]Jean D. Grambs et al., The Junior High School We Need (Washington, D. C.: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 1961), pp. 19-23.

Briggs' contributions to the junior high school movement was a hallmark of his educational career even though it was early in his career. At that time he insisted that the institutional school be rooted in principles of direction that would enable people to function not only in the framework of a prescribed setting, but also with self-direction. This chapter has highlighted his insistence on a functional based philosophy which took into account the developing life style of a student in the middle school years. The following and concluding chapter will present a summation of Thomas Briggs' educational philosophies, and his contributions to education in our society. The concluding portion of the chapter will outline Briggs' vision of secondary education; not a statement of what is, but a dream of what may be.

C H A P T E R VI

BRIGGS: SUMMARY AND VISIONS

This study has attempted to present an exposition of Thomas Briggs' philosophy of education. Two lines of development were followed: a study of Briggs the man, as revealed in his speeches, writings and teaching; and an examination of Briggs' contributions to secondary education. In following these lines of development, an effort was made to trace the long-term influence of Briggs' work upon American education.

The educational philosophy of Briggs was studied. In attempting to clarify his fundamental philosophy it was necessary to trace the origin of those personalities that influenced his way of thinking. Briggs acknowledged his indebtedness to philosopher William James, who maintained that the test of truthfulness of ideas is to be found in the relationship between these ideas and their practical consequences in action. This point of view enabled Briggs to stress the position that education must make a positive difference in everyday life. He pressed for education that functions, i.e., education that means something. It was James' philosophy that in-

fluenced educators, such as John Dewey and Thomas Briggs, to adopt, in theory at least, the ideal of education as training for adjustment to life.

Dewey defined philosophy as the general theory of education; education was the means by which philosophy could be put into human terms, the means by which it could be tested. In this sense, Briggs, along with James and Dewey, believed, as pragmatists, that the meaning of an idea is determined by the practices to which it leads. They felt that philosophies could be evaluated by developing their implications and consequences for educational practice.

It can be said that Thomas Briggs is ranked among those individuals who attempted to make philosophy relevant to the needs of his own time. He is one whose thought and activities have illuminated the issues and problems of the day and given to others greater insight and higher purpose. Although he did not introduce pragmatism, his refinement and use of the philosophy in the attempt to solve critical educational issues was of great significance.

In addition to the strong influence both James and Dewey had on young Thomas Briggs, the contributions of Josiah Royce, nineteenth century philosopher, must be

considered. Royce's major contribution to Briggs was the idea that the word "good" had no meaning until qualified by a prepositional phrase "good for what." Briggs, like Royce, was of the pragmatic philosophical school holding that nothing had any meaning or importance unless it resulted in a useful action.

Within the framework of Briggs' educational philosophy was the area of subject matter. Briggs did not reject completely the content of traditional subject matter; on the contrary, much of it has to be retained. But at the same time, Dr. Briggs was aware that much of traditional subject matter was no longer relevant to the changes of our civilization, for subject matter constantly changes in terms of what men are doing to and about their physical and social environment. Consequently, education cannot be limited to a mere recollection of experiences obtained solely from the teacher or the textbook. Education must be the constant reconstruction of past experience, including past knowledge, not just the collection of previous knowledge or previous experience. Therefore, problem solving methods are not seen merely as the search for functional knowledge, but as a perpetual grappling with subject matter.

School administrators and educators are still grappling with basic problems in education. Briggs held that in education, as in all other fields, it is vital

that practitioners utilize every discovery and every invention that promises positive results so that educators may lead in bettering their world. This was an age of perplexing change. New discoveries in the field of science, new inventions in industry; a social revolution more widespread than the world had ever known before were all generally accounted as progress in civilization. In Briggs' view, a new age requires a new education.

This study has attempted to indicate the main concerns of Thomas Briggs. A basic problem that Dr. Briggs found in the educational field was, and continues to be, the curriculum. The need for positive curriculum reform was the keystone in his educational arch. What affects, or should affect the curriculum is slowly, if at all, put into use. Briggs felt that educators on the whole are conservative largely because it is supposedly wise to play safe. It is easy after attending a lecture or perusing educational literature to give an issue verbal approval and then do nothing about it. Putting it into practical application may be difficult and it may also be dangerous.

A principal fault of educators, according to Dr. Briggs, was to give verbal approval to what was proposed, and then to feel no responsibility for application. The four main reasons for this were (1) that approval often

is given without pragmatic understanding of what has been proposed, and (2) educators are often afraid to "make waves," i.e., every educator feels that the first necessity is to hold his job, not to offend or get ahead of his public, and he is much more likely to feel this than he is to feel the responsibility of preparing his public by educating them to be receptive. A third (3) reason for educators not adventuring is their vested interest. They are content to do what they have learned how to do through experience or through courses. When a challenge comes up there is no time to reconstruct a program; or there is a lack of ingenuity, resources, or perhaps courage. A fourth (4) reason is that education that is important is dangerous. Dr. Briggs recognized the fact that when educators attempt to promote a program that is going to result in changes in attitude or action, the result would be criticism.[1]

Briggs pointed out that the United States had finer school buildings than ever before, equipment of superior quality and student enrollments of unparalleled size. What was lacking was the application of any generally accepted philosophy of education; a philosophy of education that should direct the formulation of a curriculum, the

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[1]Briggs, "Monosyllables," p. 13.

one element of outstanding importance. This was to be a curriculum so comprehensible, so adaptable, and so resultant in developed character that the results justified the great expenditure of money and effort.

All the major issues of education were, at heart, philosophical. Briggs defined philosophy as merely a coherent fundamental set of principles based on common social and political sense, as well as on existing substantiated facts. An illustration of one principle that may form a philosophy is Briggs' Great Investment Theory of Secondary Education, i.e., a prime objective of education was to make its supporting community a better place in which to live, and a better place in which to make a living. If understood and accepted, it forces attention not on any body of subject matter, however blessed by tradition, but rather on the means that must be provided in order to make a community happy and prosperous. Such philosophies have been proposed, but have not been put to use sufficiently to build the school curriculum that was needed.

Reasons were not excuses. Essential curriculum changes were needed, as Briggs pointed out, for a long time. The educator must bear some of the blame, but the real responsibility rests with the public. The citizenry had never dicided what it wished the schools to produce.

The decision rested with the public which supported the schools, furnished the children, and profited or failed to profit by what the schools taught.

After the early objections to free public secondary education the public readily accepted a traditional curriculum which was never adapted to American conditions and needs. Gradually the public increased its support of the on-going curriculum, approved its proliferation, and developed a pride that has never been totally based on a definite understanding of its purpose, its program, or an examination of its acheivements. The public had accepted too few proposals for improvement. Those proposals that were accepted, such as vocational education, were accepted reluctantly. The public, Briggs felt, had never insisted on a thorough consideration of the fundamental purpose of the secondary school - for example, whether it should be primarily a college preparatory or terminal institution, or what kind of product the school should produce.

The curriculum, to repeat, was the basic problem in education, and the problem was peculiarly acute in the secondary school. This had long been recognized by educators, from Benjamin Franklin to Thomas Briggs, who have been more critical of current practices than any layman. Their criticisms are valid, based on accumulated evidence

of failure of the traditional. Although the conventional curriculum is a great improvement over what was offered generations ago, it still retains too much of relatively little value.

Dr. Briggs was aware that many educators have worked valorously at the curriculum problem. In numerous schools teachers have been urged to make a new curriculum and, by their efforts, they have improved courses of study, but they have failed to do anything significant with the curriculum as a whole. It is unreasonable to expect them to do so considering teachers already have full-time programs, and consequently have no adequate time even to work at a solution of the major problem. It seemed strange to Dr. Briggs that teachers were never asked to contribute manually to the erection of a new building - an infinitely easier task. When teachers have worked seriously at the curriculum, they often begin by reading the theoretical literature. By the time they finished reading, they were in the state of the man who took a running start of a mile to jump over a mountain. Dr. Briggs firmly believed that curriculum making was a job for experts with an abundance of time, high ability, and resources unavailable to any single school or school system.

This problem of curriculum was the basic reason for needed agreement on a fundamental philosophy of life and of

education. Throughout his career Dr. Briggs developed guiding educational principles which were significant theoretical and practical contributions to education in our society. One such principle Briggs called the Golden Rules of Education. The "golden rules" stated that the first duty of a school was to teach people to do better the desirable things that they would do anyway; another duty of the school was to reveal higher activities and to make them both desired and maximally possible.

This principle, the "golden rules," even if not perfectly implemented or applied, has influenced the American secondary school. It is not intended to suggest either that the American secondary school is governed by but one prevailing philosophy of education, or that the influence of tradition has been entirely eliminated. There is not one prevailing philosophy of education, but several, some of them conflicting on important points of principle. In practice the secondary school reflects a number of philosophies that are, in some respects, inconsistent with each other. A philosophy is meaningful only if it directs and stimulates a man to action. Dr. Briggs, through his principle of the "golden rules," clarified one segment concerning his ideals of what education should accomplish. He laid out a guide for those who wished to think for themselves

about what should be taught and methods to be used.

Briggs' "golden rules" do not indicate precisely what educators should do, instead they place the responsibility of formulating an educational philosophy on the educator. This, in turn, demands the acceptance of responsibility, independent thought, ingenuity, courage and persisting action.

Wisely Thomas Briggs realized that the "golden rules" may not prove satisfactory to all who wish help; for some the "rules" will not seem sufficiently definite. Briggs stressed that they were not meant to be definite or conclusive, but were meant to serve as a guide. In those cases where they do not prove helpful, some similar concept of education should be established, for with no philosophy of education to guide one to conclusions, recommendations must be considered not as being authoritative, but for just what they are, expressions of one's own personal opinion.

Dr. Briggs, as a pragmatist, regarded as educative all critically evaluated experience, especially as it laid the ground work for further experience. Benefiting from previous trials and errors, the learner constantly reinterprets, or reconstructs, his experiences and thereby growth is achieved. From this growth both the pupil, emerging citizen and society benefit. In a broad sense,

in order to ensure its own continuance, any democracy must see to it that all its citizens are properly educated. In the United States, the belief that the State must promote universal education in order to preserve itself was expressed cogently in the "Great Investment Theory" of Briggs in the 1930s.

When all the reasons for education at public expense are considered, Dr. Briggs concluded that there was only one that can be justified. That reason was that education was a long-term public investment to make a community a better place in which to live, and a better place in which to make a living. This principle carried an impelling implication for the curriculum. It required that what is taught shall be planned to contribute fully, either directly or indirectly, to the betterment of the supporting community.

As an investment, education must pay dividends. Conversely, it cannot justify the expenditure of appropriated funds for teaching anything that does not contribute, and contribute more than anything else, to the betterment of the supporting community.

When the implications of the Investment Theory are realized, the question of the rights of the individual child to an education of his/her parents choosing surfaces.

Briggs felt that the child and his/her parents do have a right to seek education in any form they choose, but not at the expense of the public.

The Investment Theory, presented by Dr. Briggs, was to serve as a directive force for a new and sounder educational program. The principle however, was never attacked, disproved, substituted for a better one, or did it ever have the slightest effect, for in order to apply it, according to Dr. Briggs, one first has to find out what makes a community a better place in which to live. That is a challenge that required long effort on the part of skilled people. The same holds true for what makes a community a better place in which to make a living. Briggs felt that until there was a comprehensive understanding of what makes a community a better place in which to live, and a better place in which to make a living, society cannot confidently look forward to a steady elevation of educational practices and to a resultant improved social state.

Tracing another contribution of Thomas Briggs' to the field of secondary education, his role in the development of the junior high school was examined. In 1918, Briggs, who was frequently called the "father of the junior high school," had the privilege of visiting more than sixty junior high schools in the United States. The investi-

gation into the then current status of the fledgling junior high school was financed by a grant from the Carnegie Corporation of New York. The information gathered in his six month probe culminated in the publication of The Junior High School (1920), a book that Dr. Briggs hoped would give assistance in the determination of the character of the newly developed school.

The most important contribution, in Briggs' opinion, stemming from the six month excursion and follow-up report, was his statement of the five special functions of the junior high school:

1. To continue, in so far as it may seem wise and possible, and in a gradually decreasing degree, common, integrating education.

2. To ascertain and reasonably to satisfy pupil's important immediate and assured future needs.

3. To explore, by means of material in itself worthwhile, the interests, aptitudes, and capacities of pupils.

4. To reveal to pupils, by material otherwise justifiable, the possibilities in the major fields of learning.

5. To start each pupil on the career which, as a result of the exploratory courses, he, his parents, and the school are convinced is most likely to be of profit

to him and to the State.[2]

These functions were compiled by Dr. Briggs for, up to that period (1920), there had been no agreement on just what the purpose of the junior high school should be. Briggs was cognizant that a sudden reorganization of schools on the principles he outlined was not possible or probable. As a result Briggs presented his five-point program as an ideal to help clarify the issues, and to serve as a guide in planning the changes in schools for early adolescents.

The functions of the junior high school proposed by Briggs were generally approved in theory, although most educators could not see means of immediately putting them into practice. Briggs' statement of functions did not receive negative criticism; however, administrators, educators and teachers found them difficult to put into effect. Dr. Briggs, realizing this difficulty, stressed the need of a Curriculum Research Laboratory which would facilitate the implementation of the five functions.

In 1915, Thomas Briggs served in the leadership role of Director of the Speyer Experimental Junior High School of Columbia University, New York. This school was utilized

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[2]Briggs, The Classroom Teacher, p. 29.

to test theories of education in the same fashion as a chemist tests chemical theories in his laboratory.

The influence of the five year Speyer experience helped establish the value of the new junior high school. It was out of his work in the Speyer School, and partially due to his six month inspection of junior high schools, that Briggs confirmed his conviction that there was an urgent need for the reorganization of conventional schools. The Speyer experience also reinforced Briggs' early interest in what is taught, and, to whom as opposed to the administration of schools, the financing of education or the building program.

This study has presented for examination three major contributions of Thomas Briggs to the field of secondary education:

1. The Golden Rules of Education

2. The Great Investment Theory of Secondary Education

3. Briggs and the Junior High School Movement

Dr. Briggs was also interested and assumed responsibility for other issues in American education. The aforementioned three and the following seven topics constituted a major portion of Briggs' contribution to secondary education.

4. Issues and Functions in Secondary Education

Dr. Briggs was entirely responsible for the selection of these Issues (1936) and Functions (1937) and for the form in which they were presented to the Committee of the Re-Orientation of Secondary Education.

5. The Comprehensive Curriculum

Encompassing extra-curricular activities, emotionalized attitudes and excursions.

6. Liberal Education

Briggs maintained that a liberal education was best measured by the number and variety and depth of intellectual interests a person has. . .that no degree, or the requirements of any specific subject, is sufficient to make a man liberally educated.

7. Practical Research in Education

Research to furnish reliable information with regard to results as evaluated in terms of the accepted educational philosophy.

8. Curriculum Research Laboratory

This included the developmental engineer idea.

9. Extended and Comprehensive Definition of Democracy.

Probably the nearest to an official, national definition of democracy that we have - published by the United States Department of Justice for use in classes for

the education of immigrants.

10. Silent Reading (1906)

Dr. Briggs took part in the earliest attempt to popularize the importance of silent reading and gave suggestions as to how it should be taught.

This list represents contributions Dr. Briggs made to the field of secondary education; they are a portion of his legacy. He was entirely responsible for their works, the first three listed, were those focused upon in this investigation. Topics that Briggs referred to as the machinery of education (or housekeeping in education), i.e., the costs and buildings in education, he left to others in the field. The common link in all the studies carried on by Briggs was found to be in what was taught, and to whom, and the relationship of what was taught to the development of the individual in order that he may contribute to the development of the community.

Following this thought, Briggs felt that the curriculum, which threads its way through all of his work, should determine everything. Adequate financial support, attractive buildings and competent teachers were not enough, the curriculum would simply turn out more of a poor product.

Briggs stressed that an accepted philosophy of life, of civilization and of education should determine what was

taught and what should be taught. It was at this point that the foundation for present curriculum work was lacking, for until there was an understanding and an agreement of what sort of life was wanted - what sort of civilization was needed - most of our curriculum work was useless.

Briggs felt that the responsibility for sound, steady progress rested with educators. It was their duty to inform the public to accept definitions and principles that the professionals in education had adopted. These principles and definitions should direct all changes in programs, and evaluations of programs already in existence.

Dr. Briggs held that the idea that schools should undertake to revolutionize society, i.e., to make over civilization, was an absurdity based on egoism, and denoted a failure to realize that teachers were employed to carry out the wishes and ambitions of the public in general. Whenever educators desired to introduce some innovation, Briggs believed that their first responsibiltiy depended on convincing the public that the novelty was soundly authorized by the definitions and principles which educators have led the public to believe are worthy of acceptance. Education, especially in the secondary schools, was not likely to approach defensible goals until the public understood what it wanted, and what it should demand from its investment.

Thomas Briggs matched, if not exceeded, his own definition of a liberally educated man; he maintained that a liberal education was best measured by the number, diversity and depth of intellectual interests a person has, and that no formal degree or specific subjects taken was enough to make a person liberally educated. Dr. Briggs had an amazing range of interests. One of his great pleasures was a lively discussion, believing that a major purpose of education was to arouse interests that continue growing. The curiosity of his ever-young mind nudged him into many diverse queries, such as the collecting of flagrant figures of speech from poetry.

Briggs' lifelong interest in people grew and deepened, and through it all ran his continuous identification with the good teacher. Dr. Briggs' strong intellectual drives always focused on creating so many intellectual interests that a learner simply could not stop the search for answers. Briggs cast a wide intellectual net himself; never insisting that everything be rational and utilitarian, but always allowing room in the endless ranging of a free, questioning spirit.

Furthermore, Briggs was always equally interested in the affective, emotional development of youngsters. Nothing, however, lessened his insistence that something worthwhile had to happen as a result of education, or the

whole thing was sterile. This insistence on function has been the basic drive of the man's entire career. In all his teaching, in his training of administrators, he shaped everything to this one goal.

The legacy Thomas Briggs left us as stockholders in the enterprise of education is vast. It can be said that his legacy are those contributions Briggs made to secondary education. Briggs' legacy and challenges for the future are interrelated; the contributions that Briggs made to education remain relevant to the needs of today. Many are virtually untapped, ready for the challenges of the future. The major contributions that are examined in this study are as serviceable today as when they were first promoted by Dr. Briggs. They are a constant challenge to the school administrators of today, and those to come in the future, particularly the young men and women who have ideas of their own and the courage to use them.

Thomas Briggs was one of America's outstanding educators; his reputation as such has not yet reached national or international proportions for only one reason - a lack of publicity. His contributions to education consequently have been known to too few educators and the lay public to have had the influence they deserve. Therefore, to this point in time, his comprehensive and practical programs have had little effect on the overall development of American

education. His touch has been felt, however, in many schools and colleges across this land where distinguished educators cherish one memory in common - that they were apostles of Thomas Briggs.

Dr. Briggs can best be evaluated as an honest, courageous, and enlightened thinker whose achievements and contributions will have to be measured sometime in the future. Then, when a comprehensive philosophy applicable to the solving of educational problems is needed, the thoughts of Thomas Briggs will be there.

Visions for Secondary Education. Thomas Briggs had a vision for secondary education; a vision that would hopefully culminate in a "golden age of education." A vision should begin with a definite knowledge of as many of the factors involved as possible, and with an evaluation of their worth. A vision is an expression of what might be; of what by hope and hard work may be brought into a reality.

Dr. Briggs realized that secondary education might continue much in the way it is going and has gone in the past, i.e., largely following tradition, making small changes here and there, mostly empirical improvements in detail. Briggs believed that continuing in the old mold was precarious. The science of education has, in the past, been characterized by a search for facts, facts unrelated

to a program leading to specific goals or a program based on a sound social philosophy. Lacking this sound program and philosophy, the collected facts have created complacency and bewilderment. Briggs believed that "educators" have produced more "facts" and have done less with them than any other body of men that compose a profession.

To improve the situation and to help meet the challenge of the future, Dr. Briggs had the following suggestions:

1. Secondary education of the future must be important. The new secondary education will be based on a general recognition by the public that it is really important, vitally important; not something to be financed with hoped-for results. The new secondary education will be a wise investment made by society and will come to hold a supreme place in the estimation of society.

Briggs' vision also revealed that effective education cannot be separated from large social aims. Learning must not be confused with education. Effective education will grow from large social aims and continuously contribute to their advancement. Briggs felt that unless we can agree in what the values of life are, we have no goal in education; and if we have no goal, the discussion of methods is useless. In the "golden age" society will have

decided upon ideals, or social goals, and will require that the schools teach them the methods of attainment.

2. Secondary education of the future must be comprehensive. The new secondary education will be much more comprehensive than the traditional. New elements will be demanded in the new curriculum to satisfy the ever-changing world around us; for example, the increased leisure time of adults will be studied. Now that most material production is certain, the schools must concern themselves with education for leisure. Youngsters must learn the joys in the exercise of the intellect as well as in the exercise of the body.

Education for leisure in the new day will take its place on equal terms with education for practical or material means. There will be no contest, as there is now, between materialism and the cultural aspects of education. Society will provide for vocational training, probably on higher age levels than at present, and certainly more adequately.

Along with the training for vocations, there will be greater emphasis on a liberal education for all. By liberal education, Briggs meant initiating and developing those interests so that they were strong enough to continue for life.

3. Secondary education for the future must be planned. In contrast with the present, the future will embark

upon an extensive program of comprehensive planning. Instead of small units, often as small as a local school, being left free to follow tradition at will, Briggs foresaw society utilizing its best minds to plan the outlines of the entire educational program. This will be a full-time job. Educators, philosophers, sociologists, economists, and others of learning and wide experience will begin the continuous and unending task. It may seem costly, but such a group working in the service of the entire country will be more economical than hundreds or thousands of less efficient groups working less competently at the present time.

This central planning commission will deal with all the issues that now exist, or will develop, in theory and practice. In order to decide issues, the commission will create working definitions for the common, important terms that are now vague in meaning. Briggs was aware that such pragmatic decisions and definitions cannot be arbitrarily or finally made, however, tentatively proposed they will be submitted for general consideration and then will be modified into a working form. Once modified, they will be publicized for national and international use.

4. Secondary education of the future must be for all children. . .Briggs' vision revealed that an education stretching beyond the fundamentals will be provided for

all normal youngsters; an education suited to the abilities, interests and needs of each individual child, and continued until the law of diminishing returns takes effect. Briggs felt this is essential in a democracy. Also essential in a democracy is the guarantee that every individual shall have an equal opportunity to advance his own talents for the good of society. It follows, Briggs asserted, that because of the diversity of abilities, aptitudes, interests and possible needs of people, the offerings of the new secondary education will have to be just as diverse. The practical difficulties of such a proposition are many, but they are surmountable; such a step is necessary to meet the challenge of the future.

Recognizing the facts of immutable individual differences, Briggs believed the future should provide a "sorting school" for those grades above the elementary level. The "sorting school" will continuously search out each pupil's individual strengths. Having located these, it will provide a trial program to confirm its judgment. And then, sorted according to what he is judged most competent to do, for himself and for society, the individual will be forwarded into the correct area of specialization. Schools will be more consolidated than now to make possible increased differentiation of offerings. Some pupils, to advance their particular talents, will be sent to central

schools of specialization.

Briggs saw rapid advancement becoming very common. These schools will determine the kind of secondary education that each child will have, basing their decisions on accurate facts and best judgments. Such a program will place great responsibility on the future school teachers who will have to be solidly trained for their position.

5. Secondary education of the future must have trained teachers. Future teachers will be thoroughly trained for the responsibilities they will be expected to assume. These teachers will be trained to appreciate, genuinely appreciate as scholars have always done, the value of accurate and extensive knowledge that contributes to the goals for which they are striving. That large goal will be the betterment of society through the education of all children.

Thus trained, the teacher of the future will be the foremost citizen of each community, respected as the importance of his/her work is recognized. Briggs' teacher of tomorrow will be paid so well that the annual need to move from community to community, vying for an improved financial position, will have been made unnecessary.

Dr. Briggs' vision for the future also included many changes in organization, administration, and in subordinate agencies. These things would be tended to after

the general plan had been plotted, for only at that time will society know what kinds of schools will be needed, what types of buildings and equipment, and what methods of instruction will be suitable. To set up the standards for such things before the goals are confirmed is somewhat like erecting a building before deciding its use.

These five catagories outline Thomas Briggs' visions for secondary education. It cannot be expected that the visions of any one person will satisfy all. Briggs felt that the expressions of many visions are needed so that the best features of all can be combined into one, and thereby, in a united fashion, move toward achievement.

Dr. Thomas Briggs had great hope for the future of American secondary education. Among the thousands of educators Briggs felt that there are enough of ability and courage to bring about at least the beginning of a "golden age of education." The fulcrum of this point is the word "if" - if educators arouse themselves to exert their professional competence as conscientious and courageous leaders, the "golden age of education" will become a reality. Progress does not come from mere hoping; the road to the "golden age of education" is marked challenge, and the vehicle that will get us there is called persistent effort.

A P P E N D I X

PROBLEMS OF THE COMING INDUSTRIAL AGE AND THEIR EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

What Used To Be-Agrarian Age	What We Have Passed Through	What We Seem To Be Coming To	Possible Implications For The Schoolmaster	
Colonial New England Illinois when Lincoln was a Boy Iowa in the Days of Vandermark's Folly	Industrial Revolution I Massachusetts in 1830	Industrial Revolution II		
Employment for Everybody Free land "Anyone who truly wants to work can get a job" "Young man! Go West!"	Technological Unemployment Employment for Those Who Can Get It Differentiation of processes Decay of apprenticeship Still Free Land in West	All of the Workers Idle Some of the Time Some of the Workers Idle All of the Time Because of: a.Increasing technological unemployment b.Mergers c.Emphasis on the younger worker d.Closed frontier	Greater Importance of General and Prevocational Education Individual Versatility of Great Importance Vocational Education Must Not be Too Narrow Must Teach Importance of Savings Adult Education Highly Important	Employment
Family or Small Community Relatively Self-Sufficient Little recourse to trade Barter Personal relationships	Increasing Interdependence Trade--but few commodities	Almost Complete Interdependence Great variety of commodities Everything expressed in money value Impersonal relations We buy:ready-made clothes,--bakers bread--canned food	Increased Importance of Social Studies	Interdependence
Work-A Family Enterprise See Silas Marner;The Mill on the Floss; Boy Life on the Prarie	Factory Labor of Women and Children Social legislation as a response	More than One Wage-Earner per Family See Stuart Chase, Prosperity-Fact or Myth	Importance of Vocational Education for Girls Careers for Women The Future American Home?	Place of Women and Children

PROBLEMS OF THE COMING INDUSTRIAL AGE AND THEIR EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS (continued)

What Used To Be-Agrarian Age	What We Have Passed Through	What We Seem To Be Coming To	Possible Implications For The Schoolmaster	
Simple Standard of Living "A pain economy"	Low Standard of Living Poverty Among Workers Accumulation of Wealth	High Standard of Living in Some Ways "A pleasure economy" Salesmanship Advertising Dissipation of natural resources Automobiles Radios Washing-machines etc.	Study of Spending and Saving Consumption vs. Conservation Luxuries vs. Necessities	Standard of Living
Laissez Faire Policy Personal initiative and enterprise	Beginnings of Social Legislation Health and Morals Hours of Labor Conditions of Work	Increasing Government Control by Information Advice Direction	New Science of Government How to Develop Cooperative Powers of Individual	Control
Independence of Individual	Boss and Worker Strikes Boycotts Lockouts Collective bargaining	Cooperative Control Scientific Management Government Control Increasingly impersonal	Study of Art and Science of Administration	Administration
Leisurely Tempo Long Hours-Low Productivity Rhythm of the Seasons	Increasing Tempo Long Hours-Increased Productivity Regimentation of Life Whistles Time Clocks	Quick Tempo Short Hours-High Productivity Periodic Shutdowns Much - Idleness or Leisure When is a vacation unemployment?	Much Attention to Problems of the Use of Leisure Provision for the "Rainy Day" Problems of Hygiene-Physical and Mental	Tempo

S P E C I A L

BRIGGS SECONDARY GROUP

Third Meeting of the Year

Date: January 15, 1968

Time: 6:30 p.m.

Place: Men's Faculty Club, 117th and Morningside Drive

Program: FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE GROUP

Speakers: FRED T. WILHELMS, Associate Secretary, NASSP

THOMAS H. BRIGGS, Member, Commission on Reorganization of Secondary Education

Needless to say, this will be an unusual occasion. It will jointly recognize the man who originated our group and led it for many years and at the same time will suggest some activities and directions for this group during its second fifty-year span.

So do come!

Bring with you one or more guests who are particularly sensitive to this whole business of educating youth in America today and tomorrow.

This meeting will note the passage of years, of course. It will also serve to honor one whose contributions to Youth Education are beyond measure. It will deal with the future more than the past, but above all will deal with the very purposes for which this group, The Briggs Secondary Group, continues to assemble five times each year just as it did in 1917-18 and each year since!

Kindly fill out the enclosed postcard NOW and get it in the mail promptly.

David B. Austin

(The Third) Factotum

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SECONDARY SCHOOL PRINCIPALS

Washington, D. C. 20036

December 5, 1967

One of the rare privileges and pleasures a number of us in the Metropolitan Area have enjoyed over a period of years is the opportunity to attend the meetings of the Briggs Secondary Group. I cannot count myself among the fortunate men who once sat in Dr. Briggs' classes, but I treasure the times he has dropped in to meet with the group which has borne his illustrious name for fifty years.

As president, this year, of the National Association of Secondary School Principals, I am delighted to add my voice to those of so many others in paying tribute to Tom Briggs for his foresight in founding a Group which has flourished for more than a half century.

He will recall that moment a few years ago when he received his citation from N.A.S.S.P. at its annual Convention. Those words are as true today as then. He is a shining light in American education and his warmth and understanding have touched the lives of so many in uncounted ways.

To him go our gratitude and affection for the ideals he has instilled in the educators of this country and his influence for good in the lives of the young people of America. May his Group continue for another fifty years.

Robert L. Foose
President

RFL:ed

An example of the curriculum proposed by Benjamin Franklin for the Philadelphia Academy in 1751.

...as to their Studies, it would be well if they could be taught every Thing that is useful, and every Thing that is ornamental; But Art is long, and their Time is short. It is therefore propos'd that they learn those Things that are likely to be most useful...

WRITING — All should be taught to write a fair Hand, and swift, as that is useful to All. And with it may be learnt

DRAWING — something of Drawing, by Imitation of Prints, and some of the first Principles of Perspective.

MATH — Arithmetick, Accounts, and some of the first Principles of Geometry and Astronomy.

ENGLISH — The English Language might be taught by Grammar,

READING — Reading should also be taught, and pronouncing, properly, distinctly, emphatically; not with an even Tone, which under-does, nor a theatrical, which over-does Nature.

LETTER WRITING — To form their Stile, they should be put on Writing Letters to each other, making Abstracts of what they read...

HISTORY — History will also give Occasion to expatiate on the Advantage of Civil Orders and Constitutions how Men and their Properties are protected by joining in Societies and establishing Government.

NATURAL HISTORY — Natural History will also afford Opportunities of introducing many Observations, relating to the Preservation of Health, which may be afterwards of great Use.

GARDENING — While they are reading Natural History, might not a little Gardening, Planting, Grafting Innoculating, &c. be taught and practised; and now and then Excursions made to the neighbouring Plantations of the best Farmers, their methods observ'd and reason'd for the Information of Youth. The Improvement of Agriculture being useful to all, and Skill in it no Disparagement to any.

COMMERCE — The History of Commerce, of the invention of Arts, Rise of Manufactures, Progress of Trade, Change of its Seats, with the Reasons, Causes, &c. may also be made entertaining to Youth, and will be useful to all.

AIM OF EDUCATION

The Idea of what is true Merit should also be often presented to Youth, explain'd and inpress'd on their Minds, as consisting in an Inclination join'd with an Ability to serve Mankind, one's Country, Friends and Family; which Ability is (with the Blessing of God) to be, acquir'd or greatly encreas'd by true learning; and should indeed by the great Aim and End of all learning.

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